

**GURPS®**

Fourth Edition

# ***ACTION 1*** ***HEROES***



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*An e23 Sourcebook for GURPS®*

**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

Stock #37-0307

Version 1.0 – July 2008



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# INTRODUCTION

The modern cinematic thriller seems like simple-minded entertainment but is hardly simple. *Centuries* of adventure stories proved the timelessness of its key motives: honor, loyalty, and revenge. Many of its essential plots and archetypes originated in 1920s and '30s pulps. Its visual style borrows from the gangster flicks, war movies, and Westerns of the '30s, '40s, and '50s. Its edginess owes a debt to '60s and '70s directors, who took great risks with graphic violence, raw language, and controversial but highly influential exploitation films. And the fancy guns and gadgets snuck in from Cold War spy fiction.

**GURPS Action 1: Heroes** provides character-design guidelines for the sorts of lead roles common in action films and television series made and set in the 1990s and 2000s. As befits their origins, these men of action are more complex than their screen portrayal suggests. The ambition of **Action 1: Heroes** is to bring that depth to the game without doing violence to the genre (violence should happen in play!).

Most important, action heroes engage in nonstop thrills. This doesn't always mean fighting: creeping through jungle, chasing bad guys, defusing bombs, crash-landing planes, saving the President, hacking computers, disposing of evidence . . . that's action, too. Thus, **Action 1: Heroes** focuses on abilities useful in risky situations (described in **Action 2: Exploits**). Realistic but less-exciting skills mostly just get a nod.

Next, cinematic heroes usually work alone – or perhaps with a partner, a sidekick, or specialists who get little screen time. This *doesn't work* in an RPG unless you're running a single-player campaign. **Action 1: Heroes** assumes a more typical four- to six-gamer group. It divvies up heroic competencies and elevates traditional “bit parts” (e.g., geeky technical experts) to leading roles. Thus, all the thrilling stuff that needs doing *will* get done, but the PCs must pull together to do it; think *Ocean's Eleven*, *Ronin*, or *Sneakers*.

Finally, skills and actions – not paychecks – define heroes. Soldier, spy, cop . . . it doesn't matter. In action movies, they all get into dicey situations, do what *they* feel is the Right Thing, and have skills to match. A detective might do things that military and intelligence organizations handle in real life, but if he shoots straight, drives fast, takes down bad guys, and stays true to his values, he's still a “good cop.” Thus, the character templates in **Action 1: Heroes** sort heroes by specialty, not by job – although there are also “lenses” for specific backgrounds. This makes it much easier to run a team game.

Be warned that **Action 1: Heroes** isn't about real-world intelligence, police, and military personnel. Realistically,



## Action Who's Who

**bad guy:** Anybody who opposes a *hero*. He might be a legitimate ambassador, law officer, banker, etc. That isn't important! What matters is that he's on the wrong side.

**boss:** The lead *bad guy* – usually either incredibly competent or an utter wimp hiding behind *henchmen*.

**cannon fodder:** A lesser *bad guy* whose only job is to fight or otherwise obstruct a *hero* so that the *boss* can execute evil plans . . . or the hero.

**crew:** A group of *heroes*. Most often used in caper stories.

**henchman:** A *bad guy* midway in importance between *cannon fodder* and *boss*. A henchman often has a full name (unlike fodder, who are all “Hey you!” or “Louie!”) and a trademark weapon, and sometimes leads fodder.

**hero:** One of the protagonists in an action story, whether or not he's a nice guy. The title character of the movie *Léon* is an assassin – but still the hero (the cop, Stansfield, is the *bad guy*).

**mook:** See *cannon fodder*.

**squad:** A group of *heroes*. Most often used in military and police campaigns.

**team:** A group of *heroes*.

even heroic cops don't carry on like John McClane in *Die Hard*, spies can't afford to behave like James Bond, and soldiers aren't trained to act like John Rambo. And the fact that the same rules also let you create super-crooks *isn't* a suggestion that real-world government agencies are corrupt – it's just an admission that in the movies, “super-crook” vs. “super-spy” is mostly an issue of whose guards you're eluding and what safe you're cracking. Use **Action** in *serious* games at your own risk!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the **GURPS** Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every **GURPS** product since. During the **GURPS Third Edition** era, he compiled both **GURPS Compendium** volumes, developed **GURPS Lite**, wrote **GURPS Wizards** and **GURPS Undead**, and edited or revised over 20 other titles. With David Pulver, he produced the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**, in 2004. His latest creations include **GURPS Powers** (with Phil Masters), **GURPS Martial Arts** (with Peter Dell'Orto), and **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1-4**. Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.

# CHAPTER ONE

# ACTION

# TEMPLATES

The easiest way to make sure you have all the bits and pieces you need to fill *your* role without treading on another player's toes is to start with a *character template*. To use a template, simply pay its point cost, select any options it leaves open, and write down the abilities this gives you. To customize your PC, spend any additional points from quirks or personal disadvantages on whatever you like (subject to GM approval). See *How to Use Character Templates* (p. B258) for details.

The **Basic Set** suggests 200-300 points for the “leading roles in movies,” so these templates go right down the middle and assume a 250-point campaign. The GM is free to vary power level either way, but should know that fewer points *won't* make

**Action** more realistic! These guidelines are for larger-than-life heroes, defined more by quality than by quantity.

Since players familiar with action movies will naturally tend to create one-man-army PCs, defeating the purpose of a team, the GM is strongly encouraged to make templates *mandatory*. This runs contrary to advice elsewhere in **GURPS**, but it's for a good cause. Disadvantages are always suggestions, though; players may substitute their own choices.

Even if the GM lets players create PCs from scratch, the templates should be required reading so that there isn't *too* much overlap, and so that key competencies are covered. The *Action Heroes' Cheat Sheet* (pp. 17-23) gives further advice for those who prefer not to use templates.

## LENSES

Each template requires the player to define his hero's background by choosing one of the 20-point *lenses* (see p. B449) below. Any template can have any lens, but the GM is free to require an explanation that squares with *action* realism (not reality!). For instance, an assassin might have the law enforcement lens if he's a maverick *ex-cop* out to avenge a murdered partner. Each template's customization notes elaborate on what the standard lenses imply for that character type.

Lenses have two components that work as follows:

**Skills:** Because attributes and advantages vary by template, lens skills note relative levels (like “DX+2” and “IQ-1”), not absolute ones. Remember to add any advantage bonuses! If a skill appears on your lens *and* your template, you may combine the points assigned to it and buy a higher level. You never have to spend the whole 20 points on skills; you're welcome to save points for the lens' social advantages.

**Social Traits:** These traits are additional options for using the *template's* advantage and disadvantage allowances, not part of what lens cost buys – although you're free to use leftover points from lens skills to acquire social advantages. The social traits on the intelligence, law enforcement, military, and security lenses are for *active* agents, officers, and servicemen; see *Pulling Rank* (pp. 24-25) for effects. If the team belongs to a military unit, police force, etc., the GM may make some of these advantages mandatory.

### Criminal

20 points

You're a criminal or an ex-criminal. This lens is for a crook who's a believable hero, even if he isn't *nice*; e.g., a hacker, a casino robber, or even a principled hit man. Psycho killers and terrorists rarely make good heroes.

**Skills:** Streetwise (A) IQ [2]. • Another 18 points chosen from Brawling, Forced Entry, or Guns (Pistol), all (E) DX+1 [2]; Filch or Stealth, both (A) DX [2]; Savoir-Faire (Mafia) (E) IQ+1 [2]; Gambling or Holdout, both (A) IQ [2]; Carousing (E) HT+1 [2]; Intimidation (A) Will [2]; Urban Survival (A) Per [2]; 2 more points in any lens skill to raise it by one level; or 6 more points to raise it by two.

**Social Traits:** Crooks of all kinds may spend some of their template's advantage points (or leftover lens points) on Contact (Fence, fixer, smuggler, etc.; Appropriate skill at 12, 15, or 18; 9 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [1, 2, or 3] and/or Contact Group (Gang, mob, etc.; Skill-12, 15, or 18; 9 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [5, 10, or 15].

### Intelligence

20 points

You're an active or retired spy, or a “sleeper.” Not all spies work for governments. In the movies, *corporate* spooks are common, and nongovernmental organizations – notably the U.N. – have secret agencies.



**Skills:** 20 points chosen from Filch or Stealth, both (A) DX [2]; Area Knowledge (any) or Current Affairs (any), both (E) IQ+1 [2]; Holdout, Interrogation, Photography, Propaganda, Research, Shadowing, or Smuggling, all (A) IQ [2]; Brainwashing, Cryptography, Forgery, Intelligence Analysis, or Psychology, all (H) IQ-1 [2]; Observation or Search, both (A) Per [2]; 2 more points in any lens skill to raise it by one level; or 6 more points to raise it by two.

**Social Traits:** Officially sanctioned spies *must* take their template's Duty and *may* spend some of its advantage points (or leftover lens points) on Intelligence Rank 0-4 [5/level].

## Law Enforcement

### 20 points

You're a cop (detective, marshal, etc.), retired cop, or private investigator. The latter two have no official clout, but several templates offer useful Contact Groups.

**Skills:** Law (Police) (H) IQ [4]. • Another 16 points chosen from Forced Entry, Guns (Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, or Submachine Gun), or Liquid Projector (Sprayer), all (E) DX+1 [2]; Riding (Horse), Shortsword, or Tonfa, all (A) DX [2]; First Aid or Savoir-Faire (Police), both (E) IQ+1 [2]; Administration, Animal Handling (Dog), Criminology, Interrogation, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ [2]; Accounting, Forensics, or Tactics, all (H) IQ-1 [2]; Observation or Search, both (A) Per IQ [2]; 2 more points in any lens skill to raise it by one level; or 6 more points to raise it by two.

**Social Traits:** Active law officers *must* take their template's Duty, and *may* spend some of its advantage points (or leftover lens points) on Legal Enforcement Powers (Local or Federal) [5 or 10] and Police Rank 0-4 [5/level].

## Military

### 20 points

You have experience as a guerrilla, militiaman, reservist, regular soldier, or special operator. This need not reflect your *current* status, which is often "mercenary" in the movies.

**Skills:** Soldier (A) IQ [2]. • Another 18 points chosen from Gunner (any), Guns (any), Knife, or Parachuting, all (E) DX+1 [2]; NBC Suit, Spear, or Throwing, all (A) DX [2]; Camouflage, First Aid, Gesture, Savoir-Faire (Military), Seamanship, or Submariner, all (E) IQ+1 [2]; Artillery (any), Forward Observer, Leadership, or Scuba, all IQ (A) [2]; Strategy or Tactics, both (H) IQ-1 [2]; Swimming (E) HT+1 [2]; Hiking (A) HT [2]; Skiing (H) HT-1 [2]; Survival

(any) (A) Per [2]; 2 more points in any lens skill to raise it by one level; or 6 more points to raise it by two.

**Social Traits:** Active-duty personnel *must* take their template's Duty and *may* spend some of its advantage points (or leftover lens points) on Military Rank 0-4 [5/level].

## Security

### 20 points

You're a professional counterspy (if so, this background is to "intelligence" as "law enforcement" is to "criminal"), bodyguard, or secret policeman.

**Skills:** 20 points chosen from Fast-Draw (Pistol) or Guns (Pistol or Submachine Gun), both (E) DX+1 [2]; First Aid or Savoir-Faire (High Society or Servant), both (E) IQ+1 [2]; Administration, Criminology, Hazardous Materials (any), Holdout, or Interrogation, all (A) IQ [2]; Brainwashing, Cryptography, Intelligence Analysis, Psychology, or Tactics, all (H) IQ-1 [2]; Body Language, Observation, or Search, all (A) Per [2]; 2 more points in any lens skill to raise it by one level; or 6 more points to raise it by two.

**Social Traits:** Government agents *must* take their template's Duty, and *may* spend some of its advantage points (or leftover lens points) on Legal Enforcement Powers (Federal or Secret Service) [10 or 15] and Security Rank 0-4 [5/level].

## No LENS?

If the GM requires templates but wants to allow more latitude in character creation, he can make lenses optional. Since each template allocates 20 points for a background, this yields additional points for customization. The GM will probably want the players of heroes who don't hail from one of the above career paths to choose a specific calling and back it with points, as in these examples:

**Academic:** Split 4-8 points among Research, Teaching, and Writing, and use the other 12-16 to be great at some IQ/H skill. For a truly cinematic "prof," just buy +1 IQ!

**Athlete:** Put 20 points into ST, HT, Fit, etc.

**Journalist:** Select the intelligence lens, but replace Brainwashing, Cryptography, and Forgery with Public Speaking and/or Writing.

**Martial-Arts Master:** Spend 20 points on a fighting style from **GURPS Martial Arts**.

**Rich Adventurer:** Invest 20 points in Status and/or Wealth.

**Survivalist:** Buy 20 points' worth of Guns and outdoor skills (Camouflage, Hiking, Survival, Tracking, etc.).

# CAMPAIGN TYPES

The GM should decide what templates and lenses fit the campaign he's planning, and let the players know *before* character creation. Suggestions:

**Brotherhood in Blue:** The PCs are big-city cops dealing with mobsters, gangs, serial killers, etc. Detectives are investigators, *undercover* detectives are face men, SWAT officers are shooters,

and bomb-squad technicians are demolition men. In a high-tech game, hackers and wire rats handle surveillance. The driver of the SWAT van or chopper might be a wheel man, and an EMT could be a medic, but NPCs often fill these roles. Few forces have full-time assassins, cleaners, or infiltrators aboard. Nearly every cop will have the law enforcement lens or the security lens.

**Caper:** The PCs are *crafty* crooks who plan elaborate heists that take many game sessions to execute. Ideally, they want a face man, an investigator (for casing their mark), a wheel man, a wire rat, and several infiltrators. A hacker is vital for high-tech crime, while a demolition man is indispensable for safe-cracking. Crews like this traditionally avoid messy violence, so assassins, cleaners, and shooters aren't welcome, and a medic is often superfluous. Backgrounds are mostly criminal, unless someone is a mole or a disgruntled former agent.

**Commandos:** The PCs belong to an elite military squad that executes clandestine ops in enemy territory. Such a unit wouldn't be without shooters, a demolition man, a medic, and a wire rat (to handle communications). Many have an investigator in the form of an intelligence officer. A dedicated sniper could be an assassin *or* an ace shooter. Cleaners and infiltrators are only likely if seconded from an intelligence agency, and face men and hackers are nearly always behind-the-scenes spooks (and often NPCs). If there's a wheel man, he'll be an NPC pilot, only present during insertions and extractions. The dominant lens is military.

**Mercs:** The PCs are hired guns. Squads that are paramilitary in character will follow the guidelines for commandos. Cinematic "A-teams" sometimes do tough *domestic* jobs, though, and need to be subtler. A typical lineup consists of demolition men, shooters, and wheel men, led by a face man. Information-gathering – by hackers, infiltrators, investigators, and/or wire rats – *might* be among the services offered. A cleaner and a medic are essential if the group is illegal! Background lenses are often military but occasionally criminal.

**Spy vs. Spy:** The PCs are super-spies – real Bond types (or Powers types, in a silly game). *All* templates are valuable, but cinematic secret agents are mostly assassins, face men, infiltrators, and investigators, supported by hackers, wheel men, and wire rats. In theory, demolition men and shooters aren't subtle enough; in practice, movies are full of such "spies," often backed by a cleaner. Medic is probably the least-fun role here. Most spies have the intelligence lens; *counterspies* have the security lens.

**Task Force:** The PCs are pulled together from several government services – possibly from multiple nations – to staff

some ultra-black organization that crosses jurisdictions. This is closer to many spy movies than is true spy vs. spy. *All* templates are useful, and the challenge is to do the best you can with what you've got; even a squad of cleaners and medics could be amusing (and engage in some gruesome assassinations). Any lens *but* criminal is as likely as the next.

**Troubleshooters:** The PCs are a company of *former* agents, cops, and soldiers who hire out their skills. They solve *subtle* problems, such as corporate security, and work as detectives and bodyguards. They need a face man and some investigators above all, plus shooters, wheel men, and possibly a medic if they're bodyguards. Well-funded groups might have vans full of electronics manned by hackers and wire rats. "Officially," they don't employ assassins, cleaners, demolition men (unless they disarm bombs), and infiltrators. Any lens could work; criminal is hard on background checks, while security looks best on a résumé.

**Vigilante Justice:** The PCs are taking back the streets from pimps, dealers, and other scum. The typical vigilante is either a straightforward shooter or a self-righteous assassin or cleaner. Those who seek evidence before acting would be investigators if they mostly respect the law, infiltrators otherwise. If the group tries to garner neighborhood support, involve the media, etc., a face man is helpful. For a sizeable group, a wheel man is likely. Technical support roles – demolition man, hacker, medic, and wire rat – are rarer. Angry civilians effectively have the criminal lens (!), but disgruntled cops (law enforcement) are as likely.

**War Against Terror:** The PCs are an antiterrorist squad, battling fanatics at home. They need investigators and shooters, and a demolition man to take care of the inevitable bombs. On a large team, a hacker, an infiltrator, and/or a wire rat could greatly help with investigations. Medic and wheel man are necessary but less-exciting roles, perhaps best left to NPCs. A face man is optional unless the brass need *lots* of convincing. Assassins and cleaners lower the team to the enemy's level – use with caution. Backgrounds are normally law enforcement, military, and/or security.

## “Check Out the Big Brain . . .”

These templates portray *smart* people; several assign IQ 14-15. This might seem to contradict common wisdom that action heroes are dim-witted louts who solve problems with bullets. But consider: If McClane from *Die Hard* or Ryback from *Under Siege* were average Joes, how did they foil entire *gangs* who had excellent equipment, leadership, and planning? Violence and luck play roles, but the fact is, action heroes are the center of their world and simply *better*. Few are “rocket scientists,” but there are many other options for roleplaying high IQ:

**Audacious:** A truth of cinematic realism is that if the plan is too crazy to work, it *will* work precisely because it's crazy. Genius and insanity . . .

**Driven:** The hero might have an average or even slow mental “cruising speed” but a very high “redline,” and outperform others when motivated by desperation.

**Geeky:** Some heroes *are* rocket scientists! Hackers, medics, and wire rats in particular are “smart” in the stereotypically bookish math-and-science sense.

**Sensible:** The hero is *careful*, and more adept at avoiding foolish solutions than at concocting brilliant ones. His intelligence is a profound lack of stupidity.

**Wily:** Smart action heroes might not be deep thinkers but *creative* ones – the archetypal fox rather than the wise owl – and always a step ahead.

**Worldly:** Experience counts. Someone with a vast repertoire of tried-and-true solutions can frequently outwit people who are trying to be creative.

# TEMPLATES

## ASSASSIN

250 points

*The rifle is the first weapon you learn how to use, because it lets you keep your distance from the client. The closer you get to being a pro, the closer you can get to the client. The knife, for example, is the last thing you learn.*

– Léon, **Léon**

You might be a hit man, a spy with a license to kill, or a sniper with a uniform and a serial number. Whatever your background, your specialty is quick, silent death. Where the demolition man (pp. 8-9) might demolish a city block “just to be sure,” and the shooter (p. 14) would dive right in, guns blazing, you take pride in *precision*. On a squad, you’re the one the mooks don’t see, covering your allies from a stealthy perch.

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 16 [120]; IQ 12 [40]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 12 [0]; Per 12 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [5]; Basic Move 7 [0].

**Advantages:** Craftiness 4 [20] and Luck [15]. • A further 25 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 or +2 [10 or 20], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 or +2 [10 or 20], Per +1 to +5 [5/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Absolute Timing [2], Combat Reflexes [15], Danger Sense [15], Daredevil [15], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Gunslinger [25], Gun Perks [1/perk], Honest Face [1], Night Vision 1-9 [1/level], Peripheral Vision [15], Serendipity 1 [15], Signature Gear [Varies], Wild Talent 1 [20], Zeroed [10], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** Callous [-5]. • -25 points chosen from among Code of Honor (“Stay bought”) [-5], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Fanaticism (Employer, nation, or service) [-15], Greed [-15\*], Intolerance (Rival nation or other large group) [-5], Obsession (Assassinate a particular target) [-5\*], Secret (Professional killer) [-20], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5]. • Another -20 points chosen from among the previous traits or Bloodlust [-10\*], Insomniac [-10 or -15], Loner [-5\*], Nightmares [-5\*], No Sense of Humor [-10], Odious Personal Habits [-5 to -15], Overconfidence [-5\*], Paranoia [-10], Post-Combat Shakes [-5\*], Selfish [-5\*], or Trademark [-5 to -15].

**Primary Skills:** Camouflage (E) IQ+4 [1]-16†; Guns (Rifle) (E) DX+2 [4]-18; Holdout (A) IQ+4 [2]-16†; Shadowing (A) IQ+4 [2]-16†; and Stealth (A) DX+4 [2]-20†. • Five of Guns (Pistol, Shotgun, or Submachine Gun) (E) DX+1 [1]-17, bought from Guns (Rifle) default; or Crossbow, Fast-Draw (Knife or Pistol), Garrote, Knife, or Liquid Projector (Squirt Gun), all (E) DX [1]-16.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-16, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-17, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-15. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-15 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-16. • Five of Armoury (Small Arms), Electronics Operation (Security), or Smuggling, all (A) IQ [2]-12; Acting or Disguise, both (A) IQ+4 [2]-16†; Poisons (H) IQ-1 [2]-11; Observation or Tracking,

both (A) Per [2]-12; or 2 points to raise one of those skills or an unarmed skill by a level. • Four of Forced Entry or Jumping, both (E) DX [1]-16; Climbing or Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle), both (A) DX-1 [1]-15; Acrobatics (H) DX-2 [1]-14; or 1 point to raise one of those skills by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-12.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +4 for Craftiness.

### Customization Notes

A cinematic assassin is nearly always a deadly sniper – his major choices concern his *modus operandi* the *rest* of the time. To strike from afar, he’ll want several Guns skills, possibly Crossbow, Armoury (for expensive rifles), and Observation (for spotting). For close-range ambush, Garrote, Knife, and Fast-Draw are valuable – as are Acting and Disguise. Other “weapons” include speeding cars (Driving) and overdoses (Poisons).

Background skills are crucial, too:

**Criminal:** For the mob hit man or faceless hireling, survival demands high levels of Intimidation, Savoir-Faire (Mafia), and Streetwise.

**Intelligence:** A shadowy “wet work” specialist knows targets and locations (Area Knowledge and Current Affairs), and likely has a sideline in Interrogation. A flamboyant secret agent prefers classic “spy skills” – Cryptography, Intelligence Analysis, etc. Either might have *unusual* skills; e.g., Liquid Projector, for cyanide-spraying cigarette lighters.

**Law Enforcement:** An ex-cop, out for revenge, or a particularly cold-blooded SWAT sniper. Either should know such standard police skills as Criminology, Law, and Savoir-Faire (Police).

**Military:** This generally means a sniper, with keen Observation, training at stealthy insertion (Parachuting, Scuba, Skiing, etc.), and exceptional Tactics.

**Security:** A sharpshooter wants as much Body Language and Tactics as he can afford. A “black bag” man who illegally eliminates suspected terrorists needs Criminology and Intelligence Analysis. Either should improve Observation.

## CLEANER

250 points

*Now, you’ve got a corpse in a car, minus a head, in a garage. Take me to it.*

– The Wolf, **Pulp Fiction**

You make evidence – prints, casings, blood, bodies, and all – *disappear*. You might clean for the mob or tidy up behind ultra-black government operators, but what you do for the team is crucial: make it look like they weren’t there, and when that’s impossible, make sure that nobody can discover the truth. Some call the assassin (above) a “cleaner,” but your art isn’t killing. Of course, not every “corpse” is dead yet, and an eyewitness is the most damning evidence.



**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 14 [80]; IQ 14 [80]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 14 [0]; Per 14 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [-5]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Luck [15] and Unfazeable [15]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Will +1 to +6 [5/level], Per +1 to +6 [5/level], Acute Senses (any) [2/level], Contact Group (Junkyard, port authority, snakeheads, etc.; Skill-12, 15, or 18; 9 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [5, 10, or 15], Craftiness 1-4 [5/level], Danger Sense [15], Daredevil [15], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Gun Perks [1/perk], Honest Face [1], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Smooth Operator 1-2 [15/level], Wild Talent 1 [20], Zeroed [10], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** Callous [-5]. • -20 points chosen from among Code of Honor ("Stay bought") [-5], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Fanaticism (Employer, nation, or service) [-15], Greed [-15\*], Intolerance (Rival nation or other large group) [-5], Secret (Accessory to many crimes) [-20], or Sense of Duty (Team) [-5]. • Another -20 points chosen from among the previous traits or Compulsive Behavior (Cleaning)† [-5\*], Insomniac [-10 or -15], Loner [-5\*], Nightmares [-5\*], No Sense of Humor [-10], Odious Personal Habits [-5 to -15], Overconfidence [-5\*], Paranoia [-10], Pyromania [-5\*], Selfish [-5\*], or Stubbornness [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Driving (Automobile or Heavy Wheeled) and Stealth, both (A) DX [2]-14; Camouflage and Housekeeping, both (E) IQ+1 [2]-15; Holdout and Smuggling, both (A) IQ+1 [4]-15; and Search and Tracking, both (A) Per+1 [4]-15.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-14, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-15, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-13. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-13 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-14. • Guns (Pistol) (E) DX+1 [2]-15. • Nine of Fast-Draw (Knife or Pistol), Guns (any other), or Knife, all (E) DX [1]-14; Acting, Animal Handling (Dogs or Pigs), Disguise, Electronics Operation (Media), Explosives (Demolition or Fireworks), Fast-Talk, Freight Handling, or Hazardous Materials (Biological or Chemical), all (A) IQ-1 [1]-13; Chemistry, Forensics, or Forgery, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-12; or 1 point to raise one of those skills by a level.

## Quirky Good Luck

These templates offer Luck as a "mandatory" advantage. Players who find Daredevil or Serendipity a better match for their roleplaying style are welcome to spend the 15 points there instead. The point is that an action hero won't last long unless he enjoys *some* brand of regular good fortune!

Also in the name of PC survival, the GM should seriously consider permitting *Influencing Success Rolls* (p. B347) and *Flesh Wounds* (p. B417). If he does, players are advised to save some or all of the five points obtained from quirks as "unspent points" for use with those rules.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-14.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Failed self-control roll means you *must* try to dispose of any evidence. If enemies are beating down the door, you might resort to acid, fire, or other extreme measures.

## Customization Notes

The cleaner decides *how* he eliminates evidence. Trucking it off and dumping it with associates requires Driving (Heavy Wheeled), Freight Handling, and Hazardous Materials, plus a Contact Group. A successful skill roll by the Contact Group means the goods are incinerated, dumped overboard, or otherwise truly *gone*. A cleaner might use Animal Handling to feed bodies to animals; Chemistry to dissolve organic matter in acid; Explosives (Fireworks) for convenient fires; Acting, Disguise, and Fast-Talk to pose as the coroner; Electronics Operation (Media) to doctor security videotapes; and/or Forgery to fake death certificates.

Other considerations:

**Criminal:** A mob cleaner needs Streetwise for payoffs and Urban Survival to locate convenient Dumpsters and goalposts. Savoir-Faire (Mafia) is vital – the profession is built on connections.

**Intelligence:** Spies often make *live* people vanish. Such "hostile extractions" demand Observation and Shadowing, usually followed by Brainwashing or Interrogation. Cover-ups are also common; learn Propaganda for that.

**Law Enforcement:** A crooked cop makes a frighteningly efficient cleaner – he can operate even *after* the evidence is found! He uses Administration and Law (Police) to alter crime-scene reports, and Savoir-Faire (Police) to finagle access to the evidence locker.

**Military:** Commandos *might* bring along someone specifically to hide their activities. Secondary skills like Explosives, Guns, and Knife are likely. Lens skills will be whatever the unit teaches *all* members.

**Security:** Cinematic security agencies cover up illegal killings and kidnappings of enemies of the state with red tape – an abuse of Administration. Hazardous Materials specialties can dispose of WMD materials found during operations.

## DEMOLITION MAN

250 points

*You want broke, blind, or bedlam?*

– Basher Tarr, *Ocean's Eleven*

Setting bombs is an excellent way to learn how to defuse them, while disarming them means thinking like a bomber. Thus, "demolition man" describes explosive ordnance disposal technicians, combat engineers, *and* mad bombers. All require a steady hand and familiarity with explosives, arson, and sabotage. The differences amount to "How crazy are you?" and "Who pays for your work?" If you belong to a team, you get the fun jobs of clearing booby traps ahead and leaving nasty surprises behind.

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 13 [60]; IQ 14 [80]; HT 12 [20].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 14 [0]; Per 14 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [-5]; Basic Move 6 [0].



**Advantages:** Enhanced Dodge 3 (Dive for Cover) [15] and Luck [15]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Per +1 to +6 [5/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Absolute Timing [2], Artificer 1-3 [10/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Danger Sense [15], Daredevil [15], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Gun Perks [1/perk], Hard to Kill [2/level], High Manual Dexterity 1-4 [5/level], Rapid Healing [5] or Very Rapid Healing [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Shtick (Can strike a flame anywhere) [1], Signature Gear [Varies], Unfazeable [15], Wild Talent 1 [20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Fanaticism (Employer, nation, or service) [-15], Greed† [-15\*], Honesty† [-10\*], Intolerance (Rival nation or other large group) [-5], Secret (Bomb-making nutcase)† [-20], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record)† [-5]. • Another -10 points chosen from among those traits or Curious [-5\*], Delusion ("Explosives are safe around me!") [-5], Flashbacks [-5 or -10], Hard of Hearing [-10], Missing Digit [-2 or -5], Phobia (Loud Noises) [-10\*], Post-Combat Shakes [-5\*], Pyromania [-5\*], Trademark (Bomb design/deployment) [-5 or -10], or Wounded [-5]. • A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Callous [-5], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Oblivious [-5], Odious Personal Habits [-5 to -15], On the Edge [-15\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Stubbornness [-5], or Trickster [-15\*].

**Primary Skills:** One Explosives specialty:

1. Explosives (Demolition) (A) IQ+6 [24]-20. *Defaults:* Explosives (Underwater Demolition) (A) IQ+4 [0]-18, Explosives (Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Fireworks, and Nuclear Ordnance Disposal) (A) IQ+2 [0]-16, and Engineer (Combat) (H) IQ [0]-14.
2. Explosives (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) (A) IQ+6 [24]-20. *Defaults:* Explosives (Nuclear Ordnance Disposal) (A) IQ+4 [0]-18, and Explosives (Demolition, Fireworks, and Underwater Demolition) (A) IQ+2 [0]-16.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-13, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-14, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-12. • *Either* Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-12 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-13. • Guns (Grenade Launcher, LAW, Pistol, or Shotgun) and Guns (second choice), both (E) DX+1 [2]-14. • *Four* of Architecture, Armoury (Heavy Weapons), Artillery (any), Lockpicking, Machinist, Mechanic (Automobile), Scuba, or Traps, all (A) IQ [2]-14; Chemistry, Engineer (Combat), or Expert Skill (Military Science), all (H) IQ-1 [2]-13; or 2 points to raise one of those skills or a combat skill by a level. • *Four* of Stealth or Throwing, both (A) DX [2]-13; Smuggling (A) IQ [2]-14; Swimming (E) HT+1 [2]-13; Running (A) HT [2]-12; Scrounging (E) Per+1 [2]-15; Search (A) Per [2]-14; or 2 points to raise one of those skills or a combat skill by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-14 and Driving (Automobile or Heavy Wheeled) (A) DX-1 [1]-12.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Honesty typically *precludes* Greed, Secret, and Social Stigma in this role.

## Customization Notes

The big question is "Which Explosives specialty?" The answer depends heavily on background:

**Criminal:** Crooks favor Explosives (Demolition). Bombers use secondary skills like Architecture and Mechanic to situate explosives effectively, and Smuggling to conceal them. Safe-crackers need Lockpicking and Traps. Both benefit from Forced Entry, Filch, Holdout, and similar background skills.

**Intelligence:** Spies use skills identical to those of criminal bomb-makers. Area Knowledge, Interrogation, Observation, and Research can locate suitable targets.

**Law Enforcement:** Bomb-squad technicians need Explosives (EOD), Search, and Traps. Criminology is useful for out-guessing bombers, while Expert Skill (Military Science) and Forensics can reveal where the explosives came from.

**Military:** Soldiers might follow *either* path, acquiring Armoury, Artillery, and Guns (Grenade Launcher or LAW) along the way. Pooling secondary and background points can give formidable levels of Scuba and Swimming (for underwater demolition), Throwing (for grenades!), etc.

**Security:** As law enforcement, but focused on antiterrorism. Dirty bombs and nerve gas demand Hazardous Materials skills.

## FACE MAN

250 points

*I just don't understand it. I lie, I cheat, I steal, and I just don't get any respect!*  
– Faceman, **The A-Team** (Episode 65)

Every crew needs a "social engineer" – they just don't know it yet! You'll convince them, though, because that's your gift. Whether it's fast-talking the guards at the gate or setting up the long con, you're a pro at getting close to the mark and into his confidence. Your biggest asset is a devious mind, but you also possess cat-like grace and disarming good looks. Your chief weakness is that even your closest associates can't quite bring themselves to trust you.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 13 [60]; IQ 15 [100]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 15 [0]; Per 15 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [0]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Attractive [4]; Honest Face [1]; Luck [15]; and Smooth Operator 2 [30]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Alcohol Tolerance [1], Business Acumen 1-3 [10/level], Charisma 1-6 [5/level], Contact Group (Corporation, local black market, quartermaster, etc.; Skill-12, 15, or 18; 9 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [5, 10, or 15], Cultural Adaptability [10], Daredevil [15], Fashion Sense [5], Gun Perks [1/perk], Language Talent [10], Languages (any) [2-6/language], No Hangover [1], Rapier Wit [5], Sensitive [5] or Empathy [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Smooth Operator 3-4 [15/level], Voice [10], Wild Talent 1 [20], improve Appearance to Handsome [12] for 8 points or Very Handsome [16] for 12 points, or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.



**Disadvantages:** -15 points chosen from among Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-5, -10, or -15], Greed [-15\*], Secret (Past scams) [-5 or -10], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5], or Trickster [-15\*]. • Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Compulsive Carousing [-5\*], Compulsive Gambling [-5\*], Compulsive Lying [-15\*], or Lecherousness [-15\*]. • A further -20 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Curious [-5\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Jealousy [-10], Kleptomania [-15\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Selfish [-5\*], or Trademark [-5 to -15].

**Primary Skills:** Savoir-Faire (High Society, Mafia, Military, or Police) (E) IQ+2 [1]-17†; Acting, Fast-Talk, Leadership, and Public Speaking, all (A) IQ+1 [1]-16†; Merchant (A) IQ-1 [1]-14; Diplomacy (H) IQ [1]-15†; Carousing (E) HT+2 [1]-13†; Sex Appeal (A) HT+2 [1]-13†; Intimidation (A) Will+1 [1]-16†; and Detect Lies (H) Per [1]-15†.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-13, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-14, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-12. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-12 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-13. • Guns (Pistol) (E) DX+1 [2]-14 and Holdout (A) IQ-1 [1]-14. • Ten of Fast-Draw (Pistol) (E) DX [1]-13; Dancing, Filch, or Stealth, all (A) DX-1 [1]-12; Pickpocket or Sleight of Hand, both (H) DX-2 [1]-11; Savoir-Faire (any) (E) IQ+2 [1]-17†; Administration, Connoisseur (any), Disguise, Electronics Operation (Media), Gambling, Interrogation, Propaganda, or Smuggling, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-14; Counterfeiting, Forgery, or Psychology, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-13; Body Language (A) Per-1 [1]-14; or 1 point to raise one of those skills or any primary skill by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-15 and Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle) (A) DX-1 [1]-12.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +2 for Smooth Operator.

‡ Includes +1 for Attractive.

## Customization Notes

Face men thrive in any social situation, but most have specialties: falsifying records (Administration, Counterfeiting, Electronics Operation, and Forgery), impersonation (Disguise, plus more Acting and Fast-Talk), living large (Connoisseur, Dancing, and Gambling), “psy-ops” (Interrogation, Propaganda, Psychology, and high Detect Lies), stolen goods (Smuggling and increased Merchant), theft (Filch, Pickpocket, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth), etc. Background puts a further spin on things:

**Criminal:** A crook has background skill points in Carousing, Intimidation, Savoir-Faire (Mafia), and/or Streetwise – all of which benefit from Smooth Operator!

**Intelligence:** Some spies use social manipulation to get near objectives; they’ll want Area Knowledge of exotic destinations, Photography (for miniaturized cameras), and Search (for rifling through handbags and discarded clothing). Others are psychological warriors with scary Brainwashing, Interrogation, and Propaganda skills.

**Law Enforcement:** Undercover detectives and cinematic vice cops need Streetwise (which gets the Smooth Operator bonus), Accounting (for quick peeks at the books), and/or Criminology (to outthink the opposition).

**Military:** Military face men are well-versed in Leadership, Savoir-Faire, and Tactics. Likeable officers also know Strategy, while well-connected NPCs improve Soldier skill.

**Security:** Some agencies employ spokesmen to defuse diplomatic bombs; e.g., when a spy is deported. Most hail from the side of the company that teaches Administration and Intelligence Analysis.

## HACKER

250 points

*Gabriel: DOD d-base, 128-bit RSA encryption. Whattaya think? Impossible?*

*Stanley: Nothing’s impossible.*

– **Swordfish**

Banks and utilities, streetlights and air-traffic control, communications and security systems . . . *everything* runs on computers. If you’re legit, your beat is huge and you face rivals halfway around the globe. If you aren’t, you’re betting your laptop against million-dollar opposition. On a team, you validate false ID for the face man (pp. 9-10), kill alarms ahead of the infiltrator (pp. 11-12), pull records for the investigator (pp. 12-13), and work geek-to-geek with the wire rat (p. 16).

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 12 [40]; IQ 15 [100]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 15 [0]; Per 13 [-10]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [5]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Born to Be Wired 4 [20]; Luck [15]; and Quick Gadgeteer (H4xx0r, -50%) [25]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Absolute Timing [2], Artificer 1-3 [10/level], Business Acumen 1-3 [10/level], Contact Group (Online associates; Skill-12, 15, or 18; 9 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [5, 10, or 15], Daredevil [15], Eidetic Memory [5] or Photographic Memory [10], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Intuition [15], Mathematical Ability 1-3 [10/level], Pitiable [5], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Wild Talent 1 [20], Zeroed [10], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -15 points chosen from among Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-5, -10, or -15], Greed† [-15\*], Obsession (Hack a specific target)† [-5\*], Secret (Past hacks) [-5 or -10], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record or Minor) [-5]. • Another -10 points chosen from among those traits or Curious [-5\*], Delusion (“The real world works just like the Internet!”) [-5], Clueless [-10], Gullibility [-10\*], Honesty† [-10\*], Loner [-5\*], Oblivious [-5], Shyness [-5 or -10], or Trademark (Particular hack or “calling card”) [-5 or -10]. • A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Bad Temper [-10\*], Cowardice [-10\*], Easy to Read [-10], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Jealousy [-10], Klutz [-5] or Total Klutz [-15], Laziness [-10], Overconfidence [-5\*], Post-Combat Shakes [-5\*], Slow Riser [-5], Squeamish [-10\*], Stubbornness [-5], Trickster [-15\*], Unfit [-5] or Very Unfit [-15], or one of Overweight [-1], Fat [-3], Very Fat [-5], or Skinny [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Computer Operation (E) IQ+4 [1]-19†; Electronics Repair (Computers) (A) IQ+3 [1]-18†; Computer Programming, Cryptography, and Expert Skill (Computer Security), all (H) IQ+2 [1]-17†; and Computer Hacking (VH) IQ+3 [4]-18†.

**Secondary Skills:** Guns (Pistol) (E) DX [1]-12. • *Six of Stealth* (A) DX+1 [4]-13; Cartography, Electronics Operation (Communications, Media, Security, Sensors, or Surveillance), Research, Speed-Reading, Teaching, or Writing, all (A) IQ+1 [4]-16; Accounting, Forgery, or Intelligence Analysis, all (H) IQ [4]-15; or Scrounging (E) Per+2 [4]-15.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Bicycling (E) DX [1]-12 or Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle) (A) DX-1 [1]-11.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Honesty is for “white hats” and security experts, and normally *precludes* Greed and Obsession as motivations (but *not* Secret or Social Stigma!).

‡ Includes +4 for Born to Be Wired.

## Customization Notes

Cinematic hackers have a specialized skill set, but there’s still some flexibility. Those in grittier stories use “realistic” techniques: faking ID in order to gain physical access to the mainframe (Forgery), Dumpster-diving for passwords on Post-it notes (Scrounging), poring over manuals (Speed-Reading), etc. In more fanciful movies, they do tricks like create fancy 3D maps of the objective (Cartography), reprogram security systems (Electronics Operation (Security)), and turn traffic-monitoring systems into spy-cams (Electronics Operation (Surveillance)).

Variations include:

**Criminal:** This is *most* hackers! Even the lovable kid – that’s what Social Stigma (Minor) and Bicycling are for – might have Streetwise, Gambling (to win at online poker), and Urban Survival (to locate Dumpsters for diving).

**Intelligence:** High-tech spies generally crank up Cryptography, Intelligence Analysis, and Research. Those that spread disinformation often know Propaganda, too.

**Law Enforcement:** Realistic computer-crimes investigators mostly *aren’t* hackers, but those in the movies are frequently “reformed” criminals. These routinely ignore physical police skills in favor of Administration, Accounting, and similar cerebral stuff.

**Military:** Cinematic elite units often include a skinny guy with a rifle and an olive-drab laptop. Everybody else has to bleed and die to get him to some secure objective. His best military skills are more likely to be Forward Observer and Strategy than Guns and Hiking.

**Security:** An expert in *computer* security is as likely as one in physical security. Most of the notes for law enforcers apply, but use background skill points to buy even higher levels of Cryptography – and likely Criminology, for computer-assisted profiling.

## INFILTRATOR

250 points

*I came in from the roof. I dropped twenty floors down on a McNeal descender.*

– Virginia Baker, *Entrapment*

You’re adept at getting into places that nobody else can get into and taking things that everybody else wants – preferably sans explosions and gunshots. If all goes well, the first person to discover your handiwork is the ambassador who can’t find

his briefcase the next morning, or the watchman who realizes the Rembrandt is gone *after* it’s hanging in your condo by Central Park. When working with a crew, your priority is to go in ahead and open the door.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 15 [100]; IQ 13 [60]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 13 [0]; Per 13 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [10]; Basic Move 7 [0].

**Advantages:** Flexibility [5]; Luck [15]; and Perfect Balance [15]. • A further 25 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 or +2 [10 or 20], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 or +2 [10 or 20], Per +1 to +5 [5/level], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Absolute Direction [5] or 3D Spatial Sense [10], Absolute Timing [2], Acute Senses (any) [2/level], Breath-Holding [2/level], Catfall [10], Combat Reflexes [15], Craftiness 1-4 [5/level], Danger Sense [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 [15], Fit [5] or Very Fit [15], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Gun Perks [1/perk], High Manual Dexterity 1-4 [5/level], Night Vision 1-9 [1/level], Peripheral Vision [15], Serendipity 1 [15], Signature Gear [Varies], Wild Talent 1 [20], Zeroed [10], improve Flexibility [5] to Double-Jointed [15] for 10 points, or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** Loner (12) [-5] • -20 points chosen from among Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Greed [-15\*], Kleptomania [-15\*], Obsession (Steal a particular item) [-5\*], Secret (Past crimes) [-5 or -10], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5], or Trickster [-15\*]. • Another -25 points chosen from among the previous traits or Cowardice [-10\*], Curious [-5\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Jealousy [-10], Overconfidence [-5\*], Selfish [-5\*], Shyness [-5 or -10], Skinny [-5], Stubbornness [-5], Trademark [-5 to -15], or worsen Loner from (12) [-5] to (9) [-7] for -2 points or to (6) [-10] for -5 points.

**Primary Skills:** Forced Entry and Jumping, both (E) DX [1]-15; Stealth (A) DX [2]-15; Climbing (A) DX+3 [1]-18†‡; Escape (H) DX+1 [1]-16†; Acrobatics (H) DX [2]-15‡; and Electronics Operation (Security), Lockpicking, and Traps, all (A) IQ+1 [4]-14.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-15, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-16, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-14. • *Either* Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-14 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-15. • Guns (Pistol) (E) DX [1]-15. • *Four* of Parachuting (E) DX+1 [2]-16; Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle), Piloting (Glider), or Submarine (Free-Flooding Sub), all (A) DX [2]-15; Scuba (A) IQ [2]-13; Swimming (E) HT+1 [2]-12; Running (A) HT [2]-11; or 2 points to raise one of those skills or Acrobatics, Stealth, or an unarmed skill by a level. • *Six* of Knot-Tying (E) DX [1]-15; Filch or Throwing, both (A) DX-1 [1]-14; Camouflage or Gesture, both (E) IQ [1]-13; Animal Handling (Dogs), Architecture, Cartography, Connoisseur (any), Electronics Repair (Security), or Holdout, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Observation or Search, both (A) Per-1 [1]-12; or 1 point to raise one of those skills or Climbing, Forced Entry, or Jumping by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-13.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +3 for Flexibility.

‡ Includes +1 for Perfect Balance.



## Customization Notes

Secondary and background skill choices here vary greatly by motivation:

**Criminal:** Cat burglars steal to get rich before they're too old for tight black catsuits. Most possess commonly taught secondary skills: Driving, Holdout, Running, Search, etc. Background points buy more Forced Entry and Stealth, plus enough Savoir-Faire (Mafia) and Streetwise to score tools and move loot.

**Intelligence:** Agents who photograph missiles and steal plans learn "technical" secondary skills – Cartography, Piloting, Scuba, Submarine, etc. The background skills Observation, Photography, and Search are crucial for intelligence-gathering.

**Law Enforcement:** Some cinematic cops-turned-PIs employ illegal entry as their chief investigative technique. Likely secondary skills are Animal Handling, Driving, Filch, and Search. Fitting background skills include Criminology and a respectable level of Guns.

**Military:** Because commandos frequently infiltrate hot zones, they should pool secondary and background points to buy high levels of Camouflage, Parachuting, Scuba, and Swimming, plus more and better combat skills.

**Security:** The classic infiltrator role here is the secret policeman who finds or plants evidence where needed. Secondary points go toward Holdout, higher Forced Entry and Stealth, and unarmed skills. Background skills always include Criminology and combat training.



## INVESTIGATOR

250 points

*This is the resume of a professional mercenary! You got the world's biggest drug dealer on his way here. What, do you need a slide rule to figure it out? Or maybe another body in a zipper bag before you start asking questions?*

– Det. Lt. John McClane, **Die Hard 2**

It's crucial to know where you're headed, when the opposition intends to move, what you (or *they*) are grabbing, who you're shooting at, and *why*. Hitting the wrong mark can be embarrassing – or fatal. You might not be as slick as the face man (pp. 9-10), a computer wizard like the hacker (pp. 10-11), or the equal of the wire rat (p. 16) at surveillance, but you still get the facts, and can *coordinate* these experts and analyze their results.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 13 [60]; IQ 15 [100]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 15 [0]; Per 17 [10]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [0]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Intuition [15] and Luck [15]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Per +1 or +3 [5/level], Acute Senses (any) [2/level], Contact Group (Investigative agency or police department; Skill-12, 15, or 18; 9 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [5, 10, or 15],

Cultural Familiarity [1/culture], Danger Sense [15], Daredevil [15], Gun Perks [1/perk], Honest Face [1], Languages (any) [2-6/language], Sensitive [5] or Empathy [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Smooth Operator 1-2 [15/level], Wild Talent 1 [20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -25 points chosen from among Curious [-5\*], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-5, -10, or -15], Greed† [-15\*], Honesty† [-10\*], Obsession (Solve a particular case) [-5\*], Secret (Past crimes – or cover-ups) [-5 or -10], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record)† [-5]. • Another -25 points chosen from among the previous traits or Alcoholism [-15], Bad Temper [-10\*], Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Guilt Complex [-5], Insomniac [-10 or -15], Nightmares [-5\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Paranoia [-10], Stubbornness [-5], Truthfulness [-5\*], Workaholic [-5], or *one* of Overweight [-1], Fat [-3], or Very Fat [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Intelligence Analysis (H) IQ+1 [8]-16. • Six of Criminology, Electronics Operation (Surveillance), Interrogation, Photography, Research, Shadowing, or Speed-Reading, all (A) IQ [2]-15; Body Language, Lip Reading, Observation, Search, or Tracking, all (A) Per [2]-17; or Detect Lies (H) Per-1 [2]-16.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-13, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-14, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-12. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-12 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-13. • Guns (Pistol) (E) DX+1 [2]-14 and Holdout (A) IQ-1 [1]-14. • Three of Administration (A) IQ [2]-15; Accounting, Cryptography, Expert Skill (Military Science), Forensics, or Psychology, all (H) IQ-1 [2]-14; or another primary skill choice. • Three of Forced Entry (E) DX+1 [2]-14; Stealth (A) DX [2]-13; Area Knowledge (any), Computer Operation, or Current Affairs (any), all (E) IQ+1 [2]-16; Writing (A) IQ [2]-15; Diplomacy (H) IQ-1 [2]-14; or 2 points to raise a combat skill by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle) (A) DX-1 [1]-12.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Honesty is for legitimate lawmen, and normally *precludes* Greed and Social Stigma (but *not* the Secret!).

## Customization Notes

Investigators have significant latitude in primary skills. Their many strategies include document searches (Research and Speed-Reading), physical searches (Criminology and Search), pursuit (Shadowing and Tracking), "reading" people (Body Language and Lip Reading), shakedowns (Detect Lies and Interrogation), and surveillance (Electronics Operation, Observation, and Photography) – pick a few favorites. Secondary skills cover everything from checking the news (Current Affairs) and the 'net (Computer Operation) to forensic accounting (Accounting), lab analysis (Forensics), and other exotica.

**Criminal:** Every crew needs someone to case objectives – typically via surveillance – and formulate plans. Major background skills are Streetwise (for "word on the street"), plus Filch, Forced Entry, and Stealth for testing security, grabbing keys, etc.

*What, do you need a slide rule to figure it out? Or maybe another body in a zipper bag before you start asking questions?*

*– Det. Lt. John McClane, **Die Hard 2***

**Intelligence:** Like real spies, cinematic ones often utilize dogged research and tedious surveillance. Background training consists of many Area Knowledge and Current Affairs specialties, plus additional points plowed into primary and secondary areas.

**Law Enforcement:** The detective (private or police) might use any strategy! A decent Law (Police) skill is crucial to ensure evidence is admissible in court. Combat skills are vital when hunting *dangerous* crooks.

**Military:** Intelligence officers interrogate prisoners (Interrogation) and search enemy positions (Search). Lens skills are whatever the unit teaches *all* members.

**Security:** Counterspies use *every* means to locate spies. Background points should boost primary and secondary choices and buy the combat skills that every cinematic agent needs.

## MEDIC

250 points

*Ten-four, we're transmitting EKG. We're sending you a strip. Vitals to follow. Pulse is 160, the victim is in extreme pain, Rampart. V-fib!*

*– Paramedic John Gage, **Emergency***

Firefights, explosions, and car crashes mean injuries – and when the hurt comes down, you're ready with the dressings and defibrillator paddles. You might be a military field medic, an urban EMT, a first-rate physician, or a third-rate vet who stitches up mobsters for cash. Whatever your credentials, you find uses for your medical expertise even when nobody has been shot: captives need drugging, allies need antidotes, and an action hero's world is full of scorpion stings, snakebites, and terrorist bioweapons.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 12 [40]; IQ 15 [100]; HT 12 [20].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 15 [0]; Per 15 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [0]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Healer 4 [40]; Higher Purpose ("Medic!") [5]; and Luck [15]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Contact Group (Clinic, hospital, etc.; Skill-12, 15, or 18; 9 or less; Somewhat Reliable) [5, 10, or 15], Daredevil [15], Fearlessness [2/level] or Unfazeable [15], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], High Manual Dexterity 1-4 [5/level], Resistant to Disease (+3) or (+8) [3 or 5], Resistant to Poison (+3) [5], Sensitive [5] or Empathy [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Wild Talent 1 [20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-5, -10, or -15], Greed [-15\*], Honesty [-10\*], Secret (Used or sold

drugs, negligence, etc.) [-5, -10, or -20], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (License Revoked) [-5]. • Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Charitable [-15\*], Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Code of Honor (Hippocratic Oath) [-5], Delusion ("I'm God when I'm your doctor!") [-5], Guilt Complex [-5], Selfish [-5\*] or Selfless [-5\*], or Vow (Refuse no request for *medical* aid) [-10]. • A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Alcoholism [-15], Curious [-5\*], Insomniac [-10 or -15], Nightmares [-5\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Post-Combat Shakes [-5\*], Stubbornness [-5], Truthfulness [-5\*], or Workaholic [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Diagnosis, Pharmacy (Synthetic), and Psychology, all (H) IQ+2 [1]-17†; Physician (H) IQ+5 [8]-20†; and Surgery (VH) IQ+1 [1]-16†.

**Secondary Skills:** Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-11 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-12. • Guns (Pistol) (E) DX [1]-12. • Four of Fast-Draw (Medical Gear) or Knife, both (E) DX+1 [2]-13; NBC Suit (A) DX [2]-12; Hazardous Materials (Biological), Research, Teaching, or Writing, all (A) IQ [2]-15; Chemistry, Expert Skill (Epidemiology), Forensics, Naturalist, or Poisons, all (H) IQ-1 [2]-14; or 2 points to raise one of those skills or a grappling skill by a level. • Three of Driving (Automobile or Heavy Wheeled), Piloting (Helicopter), or Stealth, all (A) DX [2]-12; Administration or Interrogation, both (A) IQ [2]-15; Diplomacy (H) IQ-1 [2]-14; Scrounging (E) Per+1 [2]-16; or 2 points to raise one of those skills by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-15.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +4 for Healer.

## Customization Notes

Extreme Physician skill is necessary to simulate action-movie realism. With decent gear (+1 or +2 to skill), the medic can accept the -10 for instant use described in *Time Spent* (p. B346) and thus patch people up *during* a gunfight!

This suggests a talented professional; however, action-heroes are rarely bookish researchers. A better archetype is the bush doctor (Knife, Naturalist, Piloting, and Scrounging): adept at working whatever's at hand and treating venomous bites. Another is the cinematic epidemiologist (Expert Skill (Epidemiology), Hazardous Materials, Interrogation, and NBC Suit), who enters hot zones, identifies plagues, and confronts the miscreants who unleashed them. Background is equally important:

**Criminal:** A violent crew might include a back-alley doc. Good Filch and Streetwise let him steal or buy equipment – and other skills may suggest how he lost his license (Carousing or Gambling).

*Intelligence:* The hands that heal can also torture and administer truth serums. Lens skills of importance are Brainwashing, Interrogation, and improved Psychology.

*Law Enforcement:* Many an action-hero EMT is functionally a cop *and* a doctor. Crucial training includes combat skills – and often a remarkable level of Forensics.

*Military:* In military games, PC survival depends on somebody with Surgery being *right there* to stabilize mortal wounds. Corpsmen have their unit's usual background skills – especially *combat* skills.

*Security:* The notes for the intelligence lens apply. Medics are also assets on a team of bodyguards, where they'll need Body Language, Observation, and combat skills.

## SHOOTER

250 points

*National sports pistol champion at age 10. Recruited by the army. Sounds like black ops got him and trained him.*

– Hertz, **Shoot 'Em Up**

It wouldn't be an action story if the floor wasn't covered with spent brass eventually – and while the entire squad shoots when the chips are down, you're a true gunslinger. You'll tackle a whole building full of mooks, need be . . . you're *that* good. The assassin (p. 7) scores higher with the sniper rifle and the demolition man (pp. 8-9) does better with explosive weaponry, but you're not choosy. If it shoots, you can and will use it.

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 16 [120]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 12 [20].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 11 [0]; Per 12 [5]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [0]; Basic Move 7 [0].

**Advantages:** Gunslinger [25] *and* Luck [15]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Per +1 to +6 [5/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Acute Vision [2/level], Ambidexterity [5], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1-2 [15/level], Fearlessness [2/level], Fit [5] *or* Very Fit [15], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Gun Perks [1/perk], Hard to Kill [2/level], Hard to Subdue [2/level], High Pain Threshold [10], Peripheral Vision [15], Rapid Healing [5] *or* Very Rapid Healing [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Wild Talent 1 [20], *or* replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Code of Honor ("Stay bought") [-5] *or* (Soldier's) [-10], Duty (Agency, mob, service, *or* similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, *or* 15 *or* less) [-10, -15, *or* -20], Fanaticism (Employer, nation, *or* service) [-15], Greed [-15\*], Intolerance (Rival nation *or* other large group) [-5], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5] *or* (Nation) [-10], *or* Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5]. • Another -10 points chosen from among those traits *or* Bad Temper [-10\*], Berserk [-10\*], Bloodlust [-10\*], Bully [-10\*], *or* Honesty [-10\*]. • A further -20 points chosen from either of the previous lists *or* Callous [-5], Flashbacks [-5 *or* -10], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Odious Personal Habits [-5 *to* -15], On the Edge [-15\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Paranoia [-10], Stubbornness [-5], *or* Wounded [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Fast-Draw (Ammo), Forced Entry, and Jumping, all (E) DX [1]-16; *and* Acrobatics (H) DX [4]-16.

• Guns (Pistol, Shotgun, *or* Submachine Gun) (E) DX+2 [4]-18. • Seven of Guns (Light Machine Gun, Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, *or* Submachine Gun) (E) DX+1 [1]-17, bought from default to first Guns specialty; Crossbow, Fast-Draw (Long Arm *or* Pistol), Gunner (Cannon *or* Machine Gun), Guns (Grenade Launcher *or* LAW), Liquid Projector (Flamethrower *or* Sprayer), all (E) DX [1]-16; *or* Throwing (A) DX-1 [1]-15.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-16, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-17, *or* Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-15. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-15 *or* Wrestling (A) DX [2]-16. • Driving (Automobile *or* Motorcycle) and Stealth, both (A) DX-1 [1]-15; Armoury (Heavy Weapons *or* Small Arms) and Holdout, both (A) IQ+1 [4]-12; *and* Running (A) HT [2]-12.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-11.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

### Customization Notes

Choose your weapons! First, select a primary Guns skill. Options are Pistol, Shotgun, and SMG because most action games visit the city, where heavier firepower slaughters more bystanders than bad guys. The GM might permit Guns (Rifle) if there's no assassin to upstage, *or* Guns (LMG) in a military game.

Background affects remaining choices:

*Criminal:* Gangsters favor common, easily replaced weapons. Top skills are Guns (Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, and SMG), Fast-Draw, and Liquid Projector (Sprayer) for pepper spray. Archetypal background skills are Brawling and Intimidation.

*Intelligence:* Most trigger-happy "spies" are ex-military muscle. They're encouraged to favor weapons that can be concealed and/or silenced, wielded with Guns (Pistol, Rifle, and SMG), Fast-Draw, and occasionally Crossbow *or* Liquid Projector. Lens skills such as Smuggling and Holdout help hide hardware, and Area Knowledge often explains *why* a gunman was retained.

*Law Enforcement:* A SWAT man. He'll want Guns (Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, and SMG), Guns (Grenade Launcher), and Throwing. Instead of using background points for more combat skills, buy decent levels of Observation and Tactics.

*Military:* Every soldier shoots, but the "heavy weapons man" knows some of Guns (Grenade Launcher, LAW, and LMG), Gunner (Cannon and Machine Gun), and Liquid Projector (Flamethrower). In the movies, he's deadly with Knife and Spear (bayonets), trained at Tactics, and familiar with *really* heavy weapons – Artillery.

*Security:* Bodyguards lean toward concealable firepower – Guns (Pistol, Shotgun, and SMG), Fast-Draw, and Liquid Projector (Sprayer). Choice lens skills are Body Language ("Gun!"), First Aid, Holdout and Observation.

## WHEEL MAN

250 points

*Transportation is a precise business.*

– Frank Martin, **The Transporter**

As E.B. White said, "Everything in life is somewhere else, and you get there in a car." Sometimes you get there in a van, a chopper, *or* a rigid inflatable boat, but that maxim is a golden



rule for action heroes. Whether you're a lone transporter who moves high-value cargoes for a fee, or a chauffeur for gangsters, soldiers, or dignitaries, your stock in trade is *the ride*. You customize the vehicle, choose the routes, and sit behind the controls.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 14 [80]; IQ 13 [60]; HT 12 [20].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 13 [0]; Per 14 [5]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [10]; Basic Move 6 [-5].

**Advantages:** Absolute Direction [5]; Driver's Reflexes 4 [20]; Higher Purpose (Deliver the package) [5]; and Luck [15].  
 • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Per +1 to +6 [5/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Acute Vision [2/level], Alcohol Tolerance [1], Artificer 1-3 [10/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Danger Sense [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1-3 (Vehicular) [5 or 10/level], Fearlessness [2/level], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Gun Perks [1/perk], Hard to Kill [2/level], Night Vision 1-9 [1/level], Peripheral Vision [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Wild Talent 1 [20], improve Absolute Direction [5] to 3D Spatial Sense [10] for 5 points, or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Greed [-15\*], Honesty [-10\*], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5].  
 • Another -10 points chosen from among those traits or *vehicle-related* Compulsive Behavior (Modification, speeding, etc.) [-5\*], Delusions (e.g., "I'm immortal in my car!") [-5], Odious Personal Habits (e.g., "Nobody touches my ride!") [-5 or -10], or Phobias (e.g., Leaving vehicle) [-10\*].  
 • A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Bad Temper [-10\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Jealousy [-10], On the Edge [-15\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], or Stubbornness [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Three of Boating (Motorboat), Driving (Automobile, Heavy Wheeled, or Motorcycle), Piloting (Glider, Helicopter, Light Airplane, or Ultralight), or Submarine (Free-Flooding Sub), all (A) DX+4 [2]-18†. • Four of Artillery (Bombs, Guided Missile, or Torpedoes), Electronics Operation (Communications or Sensors), Freight Handling, or Mechanic (any), all (A) IQ [2]-13; Navigation (Air, Land, or Sea) (A) IQ+3 [2]-16‡; or 2 points to raise one of those skills by a level.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-14, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-15, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-13. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-13 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-14. • Three of Gunner (Cannon, Machine Gun, or Rockets) or Guns (Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, or Submachine Gun), all (E) DX+1 [2]-15. • Five of Parachuting (E) DX [1]-14; Stealth (A) DX-1 [1]-13; Area Knowledge (any) (E) IQ [1]-13; Cartography, Connoisseur (Cars), Machinist, Shadowing, or Smuggling, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-12; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-14; or 1 point to raise one of those skills by a level or buy any primary skill at one level lower.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-13.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +4 for Driver's Reflexes.

‡ Includes +3 for Absolute Direction.

## Customization Notes

Wheel men have many choices. Most want Driving and Mechanic – but some stories feature teams that travel by boat or plane, or vehicles fitted with fancy gadgets. Further considerations:

**Criminal:** Getaway drivers and “transporters” learn Driving, Freight Handling, and Navigation (Land); use personal weapons; and master Area Knowledge and Smuggling. Their top background skill is Urban Survival – to know where *not* to drive!

**Intelligence:** Spies occasionally need exotica like Submarine and Piloting (Glider), but mostly Driving. They're adept at Electronics Operation, and know Artillery and Gunner for spy-car weapons! Pooling secondary and background points allows superior Shadowing and Smuggling.

**Law Enforcement:** Cops favor Driving specialties for the department's motorcycles, cars, and vans, and/or Piloting for the chopper. Area Knowledge, Electronics Operation (Communications), and Shadowing are useful. Background points buy Observation (for stakeouts) and raise Guns to levels suitable for high-speed battles.

**Military:** Anything's possible, but helicopter pilots enjoy a special place in action movies. Artillery, Electronics Operation, and Gunner– and Parachuting, for pilots – are common. Popular lens skills are Seamanship or Submariner to crew *big* vehicles, and Camouflage for when the squad disembarks to continue on foot.

**Security:** Most bodyguard teams include a chauffeur with Driving, Mechanic for reviving shot-up rides, and Area Knowledge and Navigation (Land) to pick routes. Savoir-Faire (Servant) and First Aid may be mandatory.



# WIRE RAT

250 points

*Okay, boss, this LTX-71 concealable mike is part of the same system that NASA used when they faked the Apollo Moon landings.*

– Mother, *Sneakers*

You're the crew's ears and eyes. Cameras, mikes, tracking beacons, wiretaps, lasers bounced off windows, optical fibers under doors . . . no act of electronic privacy invasion is too small. Small is good, actually, because it's harder to see. When there's nothing on CCTV, you entertain yourself rigging remote detonators for the demolition man (pp. 8-9), running cable for the hacker (pp. 10-11), and cutting power for the infiltrator (pp. 11-12). You're truly a hotshot with the soldering gun.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 12 [40]; IQ 15 [100]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 15 [0]; Per 16 [5]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [5]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Circuit Sense 4 [20]; Gizmos 1 [5]; Luck [15]; and Quick Gadgeteer (Solder and Duct Tape, -50%) [25]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (pp. 4-5), ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Acute Hearing [2/level], Artificer 1-3 [10/level], Daredevil [15], Gizmos 2+ [5/gizmo], High Manual Dexterity 1-4 [5/level], Mathematical Ability 1-3 [10/level], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Wild Talent 1 [20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-5, -10, or -15], Greed† [-15\*], Honesty† [-10\*], Secret (Illegal wiretaps, etc.) [-5 or -10], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record)† [-5]. • Another -10 points chosen from among those traits or Curious [-5\*], Clueless [-10], Delusion ("They are listening!") [-5], Odious Personal Habit (Nosy) [-5], Oblivious [-5], Trademark (Device or wiring scheme) [-5 or -10], or Workaholic [-5]. • A further -20 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Bad Temper [-10\*], Cowardice [-10\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Paranoia [-10], Post-Combat Shakes [-5\*], Shyness [-5 or -10], Skinny [-5], Stubbornness [-5], or Trickster [-15\*].

**Primary Skills:** Electrician, Electronics Operation (Communications, Security, and Surveillance), and Electronics Repair (Communications, Security, and Surveillance), all (A) IQ+3 [1]-18‡. • Four of Electronics Operation (Media or Sensors) or Electronics Repair (Computers, Media, or Sensors), both (A) IQ+3 [1]-18‡; or 1 point to raise any primary skill by a level.

**Secondary Skills:** One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-12, Brawling (A) DX+1 [2]-13, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-11. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-11 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-12. • Guns (Pistol) (E) DX [1]-12. • Computer Operation (E) IQ [1]-15. • Seven of Fast-Draw (Gizmo) or Forced Entry, both (E) DX [1]-12; Stealth (A) DX-1 [1]-11; Camouflage (E) IQ [1]-15; Holdout, Photography, Smuggling, or Traps all (A) IQ-1 [1]-14; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-16; Body Language, Lip Reading, Observation, or Search, all (A) Per-1 [1]-15; or 1 point to raise one of those skills by a level or buy a remaining primary skill.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (pp. 4-5). • Driving (Automobile or Heavy Wheeled) (A) DX-1 [1]-11.

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Honesty is for lawmen, and normally *precludes* Greed or Social Stigma (but *not* the Secret!).

‡ Includes +4 for Circuit Sense.

## Customization Notes

Customizing a wire rat means choosing primary specialties and secondary skills that complement some forte. For instance, a surveillance man boosts Surveillance specialties, learns Media specialties for tweaking recordings, and supplements this with Camouflage and Smuggling for concealing bugs, Photography for cameras, and Body Language, Lip Reading, and Observation to understand what he's seeing. The cinematic geek, however, adds Media *and* Sensors specialties to primary skills, and learns Fast-Draw and Holdout for gizmos, Scrounging for finding parts, and Traps for digital surprises.

Likely background options:

**Criminal:** An expert at cutting power and defeating alarms requires Electrician skill and Security specialties at high levels to work *quickly*, plus *physical* lens skills: Filch, Forced Entry, Stealth, etc.

**Intelligence:** Spies are frequently surveillance experts. Combining secondary and background points allows high levels of Holdout (for "wiring" people) and Smuggling (for concealing vehicular tracking beacons). Shadowing – for prowling around in the surveillance van – is common.

**Law Enforcement:** Wiretap experts resemble spies, but SWAT teams also deploy wire rats in the field to scout criminal hideouts before raids. This activity calls for Stealth, and for background skills like Guns and Tactics.

**Military:** The squad "comms" expert has Communications specialties for radios, plus Sensors specialties for thermograph and radar. Background points go into effective Guns skills – and Forward Observer turns a radio into a deadly weapon.

**Security:** The intelligence and law enforcement notes apply, but security agents often specialize in *countersurveillance*, and train Search to high levels for finding bugs.

*The closer you get to being a pro, the closer you can get to the client.*

– Léon, *Léon*

# CHAPTER TWO

# ACTION HEROES'

# CHEAT SHEET

The GM is always free to dispense with templates and lenses completely, and let the players create whatever crazy heroes they like. Such PCs should still be *useful* and *suitable* for action gaming. The next few sections boil down the big lists

of advantages, disadvantages, and skills from the **Basic Set** to assist with this goal – and suggest some new, appropriate options.

## SUITABLE ADVANTAGES

The **Basic Set** offers a bewildering variety of advantages, many of them inappropriate for action campaigns. Below is a list of those best-suited to the genre. It excludes exotic and supernatural traits, and abilities intended primarily for low-tech and fantasy gaming. The GM is free to permit *any* advantage, of course!

<i>Advantage</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Page</i>
3D Spatial Sense	10	B34
Absolute Direction	5	B34
Absolute Timing	2	B35
Acute Senses	2/level	B35
Alcohol Tolerance	1	B100
Allies	Variable	B36
Ambidexterity	5	B39
Appearance	Variable	B21
Artificer	10/level	B90
Breath-Holding	2/level	B41
Business Acumen	10/level	B90
Catfall	10	B41
Charisma	5/level	B41
Combat Reflexes	15	B43
Contact Group	Variable	B44
Contacts	Variable	B44
Cultural Adaptability	10	B46
Cultural Familiarity	1	B23
Danger Sense	15	B47
Daredevil	15	B47
Double-Jointed	15	B56
Eidetic Memory	5	B51
Empathy	15	B51
Enhanced Defenses	Variable	B51
Fashion Sense	5	B21
Favor	Variable	B55
Fearlessness	2/level	B55
Fit	5	B55
Flexibility	5	B56

<i>Advantage</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Page</i>
Gizmos	5/gizmo	B57
Gunslinger	25	B58
Hard to Kill	2/level	B58
Hard to Subdue	2/level	B59
Healer	10/level	B90
High Manual Dexterity	5/level	B59
High Pain Threshold	10	B59
Higher Purpose	5	B59
Honest Face	1	B101
Intuition	15	B63
Language Talent	10	B65
Languages	Variable	B23
Legal Enforcement Powers	5 to 15	B65
Legal Immunity	5 to 20	B65
Luck	Variable	B66
Mathematical Ability	10/level	B90
Night Vision	1/level	B71
No Hangover	1	B101
Outdoorsman	10/level	B91
Patrons	Variable	B72
Penetrating Voice	1	B101
Perfect Balance	15	B74
Peripheral Vision	15	B74
Photographic Memory	10	B51
Pitiable	5	B22
Quick Gadgeteer	50	B57
Rank (any)	5/level	B29
Rapid Healing	5	B79
Rapier Wit	5	B79
Reputation	Variable	B26
Resistant	Variable	B80
Security Clearance	Variable	B82
Sensitive	5	B51
Serendipity	15/level	B83
Shtick	1	B101



<i>Advantage</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Page</i>
Signature Gear	Variable	B85
Smooth Operator	15/level	B91
Social Regard	5/level	B86
Trained by a Master	30	B93
Unfazeable	15	B95
Very Fit	15	B55
Very Rapid Healing	15	B79
Voice	10	B97
Wealth	10, 20, or 30	B25
Wild Talent	20/level	B99
Zeroed	10	B100

## ACTION-MOVIE ADVANTAGES

Some advantages work differently or come in new varieties in action campaigns.

### Enhanced Dodge

see p. B51

Enhanced Dodge costs 15 points/level because you can dodge *any number of times* and require no equipment to do so. Versions that work only once per turn, or that require expensive gear (like a BMW 750i E38), are cheaper:

*Enhanced Dodge (Dive for Cover)*: You get an extra +1 to Dodge when you dive for cover (p. B377) to escape an explosion. *5 points/level*.

*Enhanced Dodge (Vehicular)*: You have +1 to *vehicular* Dodge (p. B375). You may take this for a particular vehicle-operation skill (5 points/level) or for *all* vehicles (10 points/level).

### Gunslinger

see p. B58

In action games, the Gunslinger advantage gives these extra benefits:

- While you can't add your gun's Acc bonus when you Move and Attack, you *can* ignore its Bulk penalty and any *extra* penalties the GM assesses for jumping or acrobatics on foot. You ignore Bulk even while leaping between rooftops and diving through windows!
- Also ignore the rules for Bulk in close combat (p. B391). You don't get your Acc bonus in close, but never suffer a Bulk penalty there.
- When firing a gun with RoF 2-4, you can spread your shots between targets without using *Spraying Fire* (p. B409). Each attack is at -3 against two targets, -6 against three, or -9 against four.
- *Halve* all Fast-Draw (Ammo) penalties. You can easily reload while moving, crouching behind cover, etc.

### Higher Purpose

see p. B59

The medic and wheel man templates offer Higher Purpose advantages:

*Higher Purpose (Deliver the package)*: In an action scene, you get +1 to all success rolls made to ferry an important cargo or passenger: vehicular skill and Dodge rolls, Mechanic

rolls to repair breakdowns, HT rolls to remain conscious at the wheel, etc.

*Higher Purpose ("Medic!")*: In an action scene, you get +1 to all success rolls made to aid injured allies: Dodge and movement skill rolls to reach them under fire, HT rolls to stay conscious on your way there, medical skill rolls to patch them up, etc.

### Quick Gadgeteer

see p. B57

Cinematic hackers and wire rats buy this advantage with Accessibility limitations. In all cases, the hero can use *Time Spent* (p. B346) to further reduce the listed times. He *can* try a roll at -10 to perform a task instantly – often with a swift kick!

*H4xx0r*: You don't truly invent, but you can improvise solutions to computer-related problems. Minor tasks take 10 minutes and a skill roll: Computer Operation to link *any* two computers, however dated or incompatible; Computer Programming to reprogram *any* robot, missile, or similar machine using its built-in keypad; Cryptography to design a

## Gun Perks

Gun-toting heroes often have a number of flashy perks. Below, an asterisk (\*) indicates a *cinematic* perk for which Gunslinger is a prerequisite. Perks with a † require specialization by skill (usually a Guns specialty) or by weapon, as noted.

*Akimbo\*†*: You're not restricted by having two hands full of weapons. You can open doors, reload, and so forth without putting anything down. This doesn't help you *fight* using a weapon in either hand. You must specialize by skill, most often Guns (Pistol). *1 point*.

*Off-Hand Weapon Training†*: You've practiced enough that you can ignore the -4 for using the "off" hand (see p. B14) with a particular one-handed skill. The -4 for a Dual-Weapon Attack (p. B417) still applies. This perk completely replaces the Off-Hand Weapon Training *technique* (p. B232). *1 point*.

*One-Armed Bandit\*†*: You can operate a lever- or pump-action long arm *one-handed* and *without* changing your grip. The gun's RoF becomes 1. Roll against the appropriate Guns specialty before each shot. Failure wastes your turn; treat it as a Do Nothing maneuver. Critical failure means you drop your weapon! *1 point*.

*Pistol-Fist\*†*: You can roll against Guns (Pistol) to pistol-whip people (treat as a punch with brass knuckles) and Guns/2 + 3 to parry melee attacks. *1 point*.

*Weapon Bond†*: You own a weapon that's uniquely suited to you, and get +1 to effective skill when using it. This has nothing to do with quality – you're just *used* to your weapon. If you lose the weapon, you lose this perk! You may start play with a bond to any weapon you've bought with cash or as Signature Gear, most often a gun. *1 point*.

completely new cipher (normally takes a *day*); or Electronics Repair (Computers) to fix *any* computer that hasn't been utterly destroyed. Creating something from parts takes an hour and a skill roll – use Computer Programming to adapt *any* program to do a similar task (e.g., transform **Quake** into targeting software), or Electronics Repair to assemble a computer good enough to avoid equipment penalties, provided you have electronics to cannibalize. Writing a program from nothing takes you a night (12 hours, for the literal-minded) and a Computer Programming roll, and yields software that does whatever the plot calls for (subject to GM permission). -50%.

**Solder and Duct Tape:** You're an ace with electrical and electronic devices *other than* computers. Ordinary repairs (e.g., fixing a cell phone dropped in water) or improvising a device from *appropriate* parts (e.g., a bug from a cell phone – or almost anything, if you have access to a fully stocked shop) takes 10 minutes and a roll against the most relevant Electronics Repair specialty. Extraordinary repairs (e.g., fixing a phone crushed by a car) and improvising from *inappropriate* parts (e.g., a bug from a calculator) work identically, but take an hour. -50%.

## Talent

see p. B89

A few new Talents suit action heroes. These are shamelessly contrived to fit action roles and thus unlikely to be balanced in realistic campaigns!

**Born to Be Wired:** Computer Hacking, Computer Operation, Computer Programming, Cryptography, Electronics Repair (Computers), and Expert Skill (Computer Security). *Reaction bonus:* hackers; people buying stock in your dot-com. 5 points/level.

**Circuit Sense:** Electrician, Electronics Operation, Electronics Repair, and – in games that use them – Engineer (Electrical and Electronics). *Reaction bonus:* anyone you use your skills for. 5 points/level.

**Craftiness:** Acting, Camouflage, Disguise, Holdout, Shadowing, and Stealth. *Reaction bonus:* none! 5 points/level.

**Driver's Reflexes:** Boating, Driving, Piloting, and Submarine. *Reaction bonus:* passengers; gamblers betting on you at the Grand Prix. 5 points/level.

# SUITABLE DISADVANTAGES

Not every disadvantage in the **Basic Set** suits action gaming. Low-tech, exotic, and supernatural problems rarely belong in the modern world, however cinematic the GM makes it. And crippling physical problems (e.g., Blindness and Quadriplegic) don't fit the genre – they *aren't fun* in adventures involving chases, gunfights, and outrunning explosions.

Below are the disadvantages most appropriate for action heroes. The GM is welcome to allow others. An asterisk (\*) next to cost means that a self-control number is required; see pp. B120-121. The listed cost is for a self-control number of 12.

Disadvantage	Cost	Page
Absent-Mindedness	-15	B122
Alcoholism	-15	B122
Appearance	Variable	B21
Bad Sight†	-10	B123
Bad Temper	-10*	B124
Berserk	-10*	B124
Bloodlust	-10*	B125
Bully	-10*	B125
Callous	-5	B125
Charitable	-15*	B125
Chronic Depression	-15*	B126
Chummy	-5	B126
Clueless	-10	B126
Code of Honor	-5 to -15	B127
Colorblindness	-10	B127
Compulsive Behavior	-5 to -15*	B128
Cowardice	-10*	B129
Curious	-5*	B129
Delusions	-5 to -15	B130
Disturbing Voice	-10	B132
Duty	Variable	B133
Dyslexia	-10	B134
Easy to Read	-10	B134

Disadvantage	Cost	Page
Enemies	Variable	B135
Fanaticism	-15	B136
Fat	-3	B19
Fearfulness	-2/level	B136
Flashbacks	-5, -10, or -20	B136
Gigantism	0	B20
Gluttony	-5*	B137
Greed	-15*	B137
Gregarious	-10	B126
Guilt Complex	-5	B137
Gullibility	-10*	B137
Ham-Fisted	-5 or -10	B138
Hard of Hearing	-10	B138
Honesty	-10*	B138
Horrible Hangovers	-1	B165
Impulsiveness	-10*	B139
Incompetence	-1	B164
Insomniac	-10 or -15	B140
Intolerance	Variable	B140
Jealousy	-10	B140
Kleptomania	-15*	B141
Klutz	-5	B141
Laziness	-10	B142
Lecherousness	-15*	B142
Loner	-5*	B142
Low Pain Threshold	-10	B142
Minor Handicaps	-1	B165
Miserliness	-10*	B144
Missing Digit	-2 or -5	B144
Mistaken Identity	-5	B21
Motion Sickness	-10	B144
Nervous Stomach	-1	B165
Night Blindness	-10	B144
Nightmares	-5*	B144

<i>Disadvantage</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Page</i>
No Depth Perception	-15	B145
No Sense of Humor	-10	B146
No Sense of Smell/Taste	-5	B146
Oblivious	-5	B146
Obsession	-5 or -10*	B146
Odious Personal Habits	-5 to -15	B22
On the Edge	-15*	B146
Overconfidence	-5*	B148
Overweight	-1	B19
Paranoia	-10	B148
Phobias	Variable*	B148
Post-Combat Shakes	-5*	B150
Pyromania	-5*	B150
Reputation	Variable	B26
Secret	-5 to -30	B152
Selfish	-5*	B153
Selfless	-5*	B153
Sense of Duty	-2 to -20	B153
Short Attention Span	-10*	B153

<i>Disadvantage</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Page</i>
Shyness	-5, -10, or -20	B154
Skinny	-5	B18
Slow Riser	-5	B155
Social Stigma	-5 to -20	B155
Squeamish	-10*	B156
Stubbornness	-5	B157
Stuttering	-10	B157
Total Klutz	-15	B141
Trademark	-5 to -15	B159
Trickster	-15*	B159
Truthfulness	-5*	B159
Unfit	-5	B160
Unluckiness	-10	B160
Very Fat	-5	B19
Very Unfit	-15	B160
Vow	-5 to -15	B160
Workaholic	-5	B162
Wounded	-5	B162

† Assumes access to glasses or contact lenses.

## Disadvantage Limit

It isn't *fun* to saddle heroes with endless problems in over-the-top action games. Disadvantages serve mostly to give the PCs obstacles that they can overcome in order to look good. For instance, most real-life people find Lecherousness offensive, but in action movies, it's almost endearing – and when the hero overcomes his problem, the action is that much more dramatic.

The GM should consider using the following optional rule:

*Ham Clause:* The player can voluntarily inflict one of his PC's disadvantages on him during a pivotal action scene (chase, gunfight, etc.), where this would make sense. In the absence of specific effects, *all* success rolls during that scene are at -1 per -5 points (or fraction

thereof) of disadvantages. The GM should then consider the problem roleplayed for the session, ignoring its usual game mechanics. For instance, in a gunfight at the mall, the player of a hero with Lecherousness (12) [-15] could declare, "I'll bet there's a hottie in the crowd. I'm going to show off!" and fight the battle at -3. After that, the GM should give him the benefit of the doubt when the attractive police sergeant shows up . . .

Since disadvantages can be controlled like this – and shouldn't burden true action heroes much in any event – they effectively increase campaign power level. As such, the GM should impose a limit. A suggestion is -50 points of disadvantages and reduced attributes or secondary characteristics, *regardless* of power level, plus -5 points in quirks.

## SUITABLE SKILLS

In some movie somewhere, you'll find an action hero who's trained at just about any skill in the game; e.g., Ryback in *Under Siege* was a chef as well as a Navy SEAL. In practice, many skills – especially low-tech ones – are unlikely to see use. However, not every "useful" skill involves driving, fighting, or sneaking. Face men need social skills; investigators require cerebral skills (even Accounting!); and demolition men, hackers, medics, and wire rats live for technical skills.

Listed below are skills with adventuring applications of *some* kind. An asterisk (\*) next to the skill name means the skill requires specialization (but see *Specialties*, p. 22). While this list deliberately excludes most Melee Weapon skills (pp. B208-209) as "low-tech," kung fu masters are certainly welcome to learn them!

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Page</i>
Accounting	IQ/H	B174
Acrobatics	DX/H	B174
Acting	IQ/A	B174
Administration	IQ/A	B174
Animal Handling*	IQ/A	B175
Architecture/TL	IQ/A	B176
Area Knowledge*	IQ/E	B176
Armoury/TL*	IQ/A	B178
Artillery/TL*	IQ/A	B178
Axe/Mace	DX/A	B208
Bicycling	DX/E	B180
Boating/TL*	DX/A	B180
Body Language	Per/A	B181



<i><b>Skill</b></i>	<i><b>Type</b></i>	<i><b>Page</b></i>
Boxing	DX/A	B182
Brainwashing/TL	IQ/H	B182
Brawling	DX/E	B182
Broadsword	DX/A	B208
Camouflage	IQ/E	B183
Carousing	HT/E	B183
Cartography/TL	IQ/A	B183
Chemistry/TL	IQ/H	B183
Climbing	DX/A	B183
Computer Hacking/TL	IQ/VH	B184
Computer Operation/TL	IQ/E	B184
Computer Programming/TL	IQ/H	B184
Connoisseur*	IQ/A	B185
Counterfeiting/TL	IQ/H	B185
Criminology/TL	IQ/A	B186
Crossbow	DX/E	B186
Cryptography/TL	IQ/H	B186
Current Affairs/TL*	IQ/E	B186
Dancing	DX/A	B187
Detect Lies	Per/H	B187
Diagnosis/TL	IQ/H	B187
Diplomacy	IQ/H	B187
Disguise/TL	IQ/A	B187
Diving Suit/TL	DX/A	B192
Driving/TL*	DX/A	B188
Electrician/TL	IQ/A	B189
Electronics Operation/TL*	IQ/A	B189
Electronics Repair/TL*	IQ/A	B190
Engineer/TL*	IQ/H	B190
Escape	DX/H	B192
Expert Skill/TL*	IQ/H	B193
Explosives/TL*	IQ/A	B194
Fast-Draw*	DX/E	B194
Fast-Talk	IQ/A	B195
Filch	DX/A	B195
First Aid/TL	IQ/E	B195
Forced Entry	DX/E	B196
Forensics/TL	IQ/H	B196
Forgery/TL	IQ/H	B196
Forward Observer/TL	IQ/A	B196
Freight Handling/TL	IQ/A	B197
Gambling	IQ/A	B197
Garrote	DX/E	B197
Gesture	IQ/E	B198
Gunner/TL*	DX/E	B198
Guns/TL*	DX/E	B198
Hazardous Materials/TL*	IQ/A	B199
Hiking	HT/A	B200
Holdout	IQ/A	B200
Housekeeping	IQ/E	B200
Intelligence Analysis/TL	IQ/H	B201
Interrogation	IQ/A	B202
Intimidation	Will/A	B202
Judo	DX/H	B203
Jumping	DX/E	B203
Karate	DX/H	B203
Knife	DX/E	B208
Knot-Tying	DX/E	B203
Law*	IQ/H	B204
Leadership	IQ/A	B204
Lifting	HT/A	B205

<i><b>Skill</b></i>	<i><b>Type</b></i>	<i><b>Page</b></i>
Lip Reading	Per/A	B205
Liquid Projector/TL*	DX/E	B205
Lockpicking/TL	IQ/A	B206
Machinist/TL	IQ/A	B206
Mechanic/TL*	IQ/A	B207
Merchant	IQ/A	B209
Naturalist*	IQ/H	B211
Navigation/TL*	IQ/A	B211
NBC Suit/TL	DX/A	B192
Observation	Per/A	B211
Parachuting/TL	DX/E	B212
Pharmacy/TL (Synthetic)	IQ/H	B213
Photography/TL	IQ/A	B213
Physician/TL	IQ/H	B213
Pickpocket	DX/H	B213
Piloting/TL*	DX/A	B214
Poisons/TL	IQ/H	B214
Professional Skill	DX/A or IQ/A	B215
Propaganda/TL	IQ/A	B216
Psychology	IQ/H	B216
Public Speaking	IQ/A	B216
Research/TL	IQ/A	B217
Riding*	DX/A	B217
Running	HT/A	B218
Savoir-Faire*	IQ/E	B218
Scrounging	Per/E	B218
Scuba/TL	IQ/A	B219
Seamanship/TL	IQ/E	B185
Search	Per/A	B219
Sex Appeal	HT/A	B219
Shadowing	IQ/A	B219
Shiphandling/TL*	IQ/H	B220
Shortsword	DX/A	B209
Skiing	HT/H	B221
Sleight of Hand	DX/H	B221
Smuggling	IQ/A	B221
Soldier/TL	IQ/A	B221
Spear	DX/A	B208
Speed-Reading	IQ/A	B222
Staff	DX/A	B208
Stealth	DX/A	B222
Strategy*	IQ/H	B222
Streetwise	IQ/A	B223
Submarine/TL*	DX/A	B223
Submariner/TL	IQ/E	B185
Sumo Wrestling	DX/A	B223
Surgery/TL	IQ/VH	B223
Survival*	Per/A	B223
Swimming	HT/E	B224
Tactics	IQ/H	B224
Teaching	IQ/A	B224
Throwing	DX/A	B226
Thrown Weapon*	DX/E	B226
Tonfa	DX/A	B209
Tracking	Per/A	B226
Traps/TL	IQ/A	B226
Two-Handed Axe/Mace	DX/A	B208
Urban Survival	Per/A	B228
Ventriloquism	IQ/H	B228
Wrestling	DX/A	B228
Writing	IQ/A	B228

## Everyman Skills

There are certain things that it's hard to imagine an action hero being unable to do, but that require skills in **GURPS**. To avoid embarrassing situations where a slick operator is reduced to default rolls, be sure to put at least a point into each of the following:

- **Computer Operation:** In movies made and set in the 1990s and 2000s, only heroes whose shtick is "rabid technophobe" *can't* use computers. In particular, this is the skill to use for a simple web search; save Research for *serious* cyber-stalking.

- **Driving:** Many real-life urbanites do without wheels, but no action hero would be caught without the ability to drive. The typical specialty is one of Automobile, Heavy Wheeled, or Motorcycle.

- **Guns (Pistol):** While not all action is fighting, even the mousiest hackers and wire rats can fire handguns well enough to justify a point in this skill.

- **Stealth:** When the team sneaks around as a group, it can only do so as well as its *least*-stealthy member.

The GM is advised to limit Incompetence (p. B164) to the above skills (for Driving and Guns, this punishes *every* specialty!) and the primary skills on a hero's template.

## SPECIALTIES

Many high-tech skills require specialization (p. B169). The GM is welcome to *ignore* specialties to simplify the game – but it's generally wise to enforce them in order to give each team member his own niche. However, a few skills need only a small subset of their usual specialties in an action game:

**Animal Handling:** The Dogs specialty is useful around guard, police, and sniffer dogs. Few other specialties matter (although Pigs is handy for disposing of corpses).

**Armoury:** Typical action heroes mainly need the Heavy Weapons and Small Arms specialties.

**Boating:** Zodiacs and other small landing craft often appear in action movies, and call for the Motorboat specialty. Other specialties are primarily hobby skills.

**Driving:** Automobile (cars), Heavy Wheeled (trucks), and Motorcycle (bikes) are the specialties of major importance.

**Electronics Operation:** Common action-movie specialties are Communications (for radios), Media (for manipulating photos and recordings), Security (for alarms), Sensors (for radars, thermographs, etc.), and Surveillance (for wiretaps, miniature cameras, etc.).

**Electronics Repair:** As Electronics Operation, but add the Computers specialty.

**Engineer:** Only the Combat specialty sees regular use in the field.

**Expert Skill:** Hackers need Computer Security to defeat rivals. Medics likely to face terrorist bioweapons require Epidemiology. Nonmilitary heroes who want to recognize military weapons and vehicles should learn Military Science.

**Law:** The Police specialty – to avoid procedural errors during arrests and searches – is the sole area of importance to PCs (as opposed to NPC lawyers).

**Mechanic:** The specialties corresponding to the Boating, Driving, Piloting, and Submarine skills named here are most relevant.

**Piloting:** Glider, Helicopter, Light Airplane, and Ultralight are the usual specialties for small aircraft. A pilot *might* want High-Performance Airplane on the off chance that someone leaves a jet fighter sitting around, *Tomorrow Never Dies*-style.

**Riding:** Only the Horse and Camel specialties are commonly available in modern settings.

**Submarine:** The Free-Flooding Sub specialty is needed to handle the large "swimmer delivery vehicles" used by naval commandos (small ones use Scuba).

## FAMILIARITY

Simply ignore *Familiarity* (p. B169) in an action game. In the movies, every action hero knows how to shoot just about every gun within his specialties, drive any car he hops into, and so on.

## DEFAULTS

Defaults between skills are a complication best ignored in an action game. However, since experts at Driving, Explosives, Gunner, Guns, and Piloting tend to know multiple specialties of those skills, defaults between *those* are worth using!

For instance, the Light Machine Gun (LMG), Pistol, Rifle, Shotgun, and Submachine Gun (SMG) specialties of Guns all default to each other at -2. Action heroes generally improve one to a high level and raise the others from default (p. B173).

**Example:** Victor has Guns (Pistol) at DX+3, for 8 points. This gives him all the other common Guns specialties at DX+1 – the 2-point level – for "free." If he decides to learn Guns (Rifle) and Guns (SMG) at DX+3, too, he can save 2 points on each and buy that level for 6 points per skill.

The templates on pp. 7-16 already consider inter-specialty defaults, where applicable.

# WILDCARD SKILLS

The skill table (pp. 20-22) and templates (pp. 7-16) include only a subset of the skills in the **Basic Set**. That's still lots of skills! The GM who's just learning **GURPS** or running the game for new players, or who finds it tedious to match skills to tasks

and doesn't have **Action 2: Exploits** for advice, may want to simplify. One way to do this is with wildcard skills (p. B175).

Below is a wildcard skill for each template. Find the wildcard skill that matches the template, remove the ordinary skills

it covers *and* their supporting Talents (Born to Be Wired, Circuit Sense, Craftiness, Driver's Reflexes, Healer, and Smooth Operator) from the template, and spend the points originally assigned to those things on as much of the wildcard skill as they'll buy. Use leftover points however you like!

**Assassin!** (DX). Replaces Fast-Draw (Knife and Pistol), Garrote, Knife, and Stealth. Doesn't stand in for ranged weapon skills in general, but for aimed or surprise shots *out of combat*, the assassin can roll against the higher of this skill or his combat skill with *any* ranged weapon. Make an IQ-based roll for Acting, Camouflage, Disguise, Holdout, Poisons, Shadowing, or Smuggling, or a Per-based roll for Tracking.

**Cleaner!** (IQ). Replaces Camouflage, Freight Handling, Holdout, Housekeeping, and Smuggling – and also Animal Handling, Chemistry, Electronics Operation, Explosives, Forgery, and Hazardous Materials whenever the objective is to doctor evidence, dispose of it, or create fake records legitimizing it. Make a Per-based roll for Search or Tracking, or a DX-based roll for Stealth.

**Demolition Man!** (IQ). Replaces Engineer (Combat), Explosives (any), and Traps; Architecture and Mechanic when planting bombs in buildings and vehicles, respectively; Armoury (any), Artillery (any), and Expert Skill (Military Science) when dealing with *explosive* weapons; Chemistry to manufacture explosives; and Smuggling to hide bombs. Make a Per-based roll for Search to *find* a hidden bomb. Make a DX-based roll to attack with Guns (Grenade Launcher and LAW), or to chuck hand grenades with Throwing.

**Face Man!** (IQ). Replaces Acting, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Gambling, Leadership, Merchant, Propaganda, Public Speaking, and Savoir-Faire – and Administration and Psychology for the purpose of social manipulation. Make a DX-based roll for Dancing, a HT-based roll for Carousing or Sex Appeal, a Will-based roll for Intimidation, or a Per-based roll for Body Language or Detect Lies.

**Hacker!** (IQ). Replaces Computer Hacking, Computer Operation, Computer Programming, Cryptography, Electronics Repair (Computers), and Expert Skill (Computer Security). Can also stand in for Accounting, Cartography, Forgery, Research, or Speed-Reading when creating, seeking, reading, or altering digital files via computer – but *not* when working with printed or written records!

**Infiltrator!** (DX). Replaces Acrobatics, Climbing, Escape, Filch, Forced Entry, Jumping, and Stealth – and Knot-Tying and Throwing for climbing lines and grapnels. Make an IQ-based roll for Camouflage, Electronics Operation (Security), or Lockpicking, or to exploit Architecture or Cartography to plan a robbery. Make Per-based rolls to use Traps to detect security devices and IQ-based rolls to disarm them – but never to *set* traps.

**Investigator!** (IQ). Replaces Criminology, Electronics Operation (Surveillance), Forensics, Intelligence Analysis, Interrogation, Photography, Research, and Shadowing; Accounting and Speed-Reading when the objective is to spot irregularities in records; and Computer Operation when accessing DMV records, fingerprint libraries, Interpol databases, etc. Make a Per-based roll for Body Language, Detect Lies, Lip Reading, Observation, Search, or Tracking.

**Medic!** (IQ). Replaces Diagnosis, Expert Skill (Epidemiology), Hazardous Materials (Biological), Pharmacy, Physician, Poisons, Psychology, Surgery – and also Chemistry when dealing with drugs, Forensics when conducting an autopsy,

and Naturalist to know what toxin or venom is afflicting someone.

**Shooter!** (DX). Replaces *all* Crossbow, Gunner, Guns, and Liquid Projector skills, plus associated Fast-Draw specialties. Also covers any use of Acrobatics, Jumping, or Stealth to move around in a gunfight, counts as Brawling when slugging someone with a pistol, works as Forced Entry when shooting locks and doors, and stands in for Throwing when hurling a hand grenade or an empty handgun at enemies (or a *loaded* weapon to an ally!). Make an IQ-based roll for Armoury to get a gun working again.

**Wheel Man!** (DX). Replaces Boating, Driving, Piloting, and Submarine specialties for vehicles small enough for one person to operate; any Gunner skill needed to fire built-in weapons on such rides; and Parachuting to bail out. Make an IQ-based roll for Artillery (any) or Electronics Operation (any) for vehicular systems, Freight Handling to pack a vehicle, Mechanic to make repairs, Navigation to plot a course, or Shadowing to follow someone in a vehicle.

**Wire Rat!** (IQ). Replaces Electrician and all Electronics Operation and Electronics Repair specialties, and any use of Camouflage, Holdout, Smuggling, or Traps to hide an electronic device such as an alarm, beacon, or bug. Make a Per-based roll for Search or Traps when the objective is to *find* such a gizmo, and for any use of Scrounging to locate parts.

*I just don't understand it.  
I lie, I cheat, I steal, and I  
just don't get any respect!*

*– Faceman,  
The A-Team  
(Episode 65)*

## WHEN NOT TO USE WILDCARD SKILLS

While complex, skill diversity is often *appropriate*. Lone action heroes need to be broadly capable, but stories about *teams* stress the depth of individual expertise to justify the large crew. Plots turn on each colleague being trained at diverse technical tasks that the others can't do.

Moreover, skill distinctions are key characterization elements in action stories where multiple heroes fill similar roles. Consider three detectives: a thinker who focuses on criminology and research, a techie who stalks suspects using microphones and cameras, and a spokeswoman who grills people and watches their reactions. If they're all meant to be skilled *investigators* – not an investigator, a wire rat, and a face woman – then it's vital not to gloss over their differences.

Thus, the GM is advised *not* to use wildcard skills for crews of more than three PCs and/or teams where everyone has a similar role.



# CHAPTER THREE

# PULLING RANK

Action heroes frequently work for intelligence, law-enforcement, military, or security services. Normally, either *all* or *none* of them will be active operators, although they might not all serve the same master; details depend on the campaign. Employees of such organizations can buy social advantages (see *Lenses*, pp. 4-5) that entitle them to ask their employers for assistance.

To get help, the person asking must be in good standing with his organization – that is, he has to have and *honor* a Duty to his employer at the “9 or less” level or above, and hold Rank. Rank 0 counts! It costs 0 points, but it isn’t the same as *no* Rank. Somebody with no Rank has no Duty . . . and no chance of receiving aid.

The chance on 3d of getting assistance, the Assistance Roll (AR), depends on Rank; see the *Assistance Table*. If several PCs with the same boss need help, roll *once* for the person of *highest* Rank, adding 1/5 of the total Rank of the others (rounded down) to his Rank. For instance, a Rank 3 spy, two Rank 2 agents, and a Rank 1 operative would roll as if their Rank were  $3 + (2 + 2 + 1)/5 = 4$ .

If an NPC preauthorized aid for the mission, use *his* Rank (usually 5+) instead. In this case, the GM may *fake* the roll. It might be crucial to the plot that help arrives – or that a double-crossing NPC hangs the heroes out to dry!

## MODIFIERS

Odds of assistance are *low* for junior operators – even in a sizeable team – but an AR is a success roll, subject to Luck and *Buying Success* (p. B347). Several bonuses may apply, too. Of course, there may be *penalties*, and if modified AR falls below 3, there’s *no* chance of success!

- *Person requesting aid has Smooth Operator*: +Talent.\*
- *Person requesting aid makes Administration skill roll*: +2 for critical success, +1 for success, -1 for failure, or -2 for critical failure.\*
- *Previous requests by team this adventure*: -1 per AR after first.
- *Request especially appropriate to situation*: +1 to +5.†
- *Request especially inappropriate to situation*: -1 to -10, and failure by 10+ or critical failure means disciplinary action.†

- *Specific modifiers*: See *Sample Assistance* (below) for modifiers that apply instead of or as well as those for appropriateness.

\* Administration works only in situations with paperwork; Smooth Operator, only in person. *Neither* applies when requesting help over the phone or radio!

† The GM judges what’s appropriate or inappropriate. A wounded Military Rank 0 soldier might get +5 when shouting for medevac, while even a Rank 8 general would have -10 to request a nuclear strike “just because.”

## SAMPLE ASSISTANCE

The players should limit their requests to things that suit action-movie realism – and the GM should occasionally reward cooperation by awarding +1 to +5 to the AR, or by *fudging* the roll and having help just show up, if that would be more fun. Beyond what’s reasonable, though, is what’s *possible*. This list isn’t exhaustive, but it’s a good start:

**Aerial Surveillance**: Helicopter arrives in 1d+10 minutes, or 1d hours outside city. Crew report what they see in real time over the radio.

**Backup**: NPCs at most equal to the PCs in number arrive *quietly* in 1d+10 minutes, or in 1d hours outside the city. They have a few relevant skills – Driving, First Aid, Guns, etc. – at level 10-15 (1d+9), and carry handguns.

**Bailout**: Heroes arrested by police while following orders or who have 15-point Legal Enforcement Powers can “get out of jail free” with a successful AR. Results take 10 minutes in home jurisdiction but 3d hours in another (friendly) jurisdiction.

**Base Access**: Permission to enter a military base *other* than the soldiers’ post. Roll at the gate, at +5 unless it’s a *secret* base or one for a service different from the heroes’.

**Cash**: Collected in person or comes by courier in one day. Maximum \$100 at Rank 0, \$300 at Rank 1, \$1,000 at Rank 2, \$3,000 at Rank 3, \$10,000 at Rank 4, \$30,000 at Rank 5, \$100,000 at Rank 6, \$300,000 at Rank 7, or \$1,000,000 at Rank 8. Multiply by 10 if it’s for *show* and will be returned.

*Assistance Table*

Rank	0*	1	2	3	4	5†	6†	7†	8†
Assistance Roll	3	5	7	9	10	11	12	13	14

\* Heroes with Intelligence or Military Rank *must* have a Duty to claim Rank 0+; those with Police or Security Rank require Duty and Legal Enforcement Powers.

† Starting PCs can’t buy Rank 5+ but can be *promoted* there in play (GM’s option).

**Disappearance:** “Authorization” to make an *illegal* arrest. The PCs must do the dirty work – this just guarantees that they’ll get a holding cell and no legal trouble. AR is at -5 if target isn’t a known terrorist. Takes *at least* 1d hours to set up.

**Facilities:** Access to the best-quality computer, lab, machine shop, etc., where the heroes can use appropriate skills at +4. This is only possible in person, in home territory, for facilities that make sense (e.g., cops can access an auto garage but not code-breaking supercomputers).

**False ID:** A temporary identity (p. B31), ready in one day.

**Files:** Dossiers, manuals, maps, etc. Collect in person, take electronic delivery in 1d minutes, or wait a day for a courier.

**Fire Support:** Air or artillery strike, starting 1d minutes after the call unless preplanned. AR is at -5 outside a combat zone or -10 in friendly territory!

**Forensics:** Autopsy, crime-scene analysis, DNA test, etc., conducted on request. Report comes in a day, electronically or by courier.

**Insertion/Extraction:** *Clandestine* drop or pickup via helicopter, sub, etc. Time varies from 1d+10 minutes for loitering support to a day or more if called in cold.

**Medevac:** Ambulance for urban operators or chopper for soldiers. Typically arrives in 1d+10 minutes, but may take 1d hours or worse in remote areas. AR is at +5 to +10 under legitimate circumstances.

**Records Search:** An appropriate database search – DMV for a city cop, Interpol for a federal agent, etc. Collect it in person, take electronic delivery in 1d minutes, or wait a day for a courier.

**Replacement Gear:** Anything standard-issue for organization and mission. Collect it in person or wait a day for a courier (or 1d days for a *big* item like a vehicle). Military personnel (only) can get an airdrop in the field in just 1d hours.

**Safe House:** A structure outside friendly territory, unknown to the opposition, checked for bugs, and stocked with food and medical supplies. It takes a phone call to get the address. The building might be 3d miles away in town, or in the nearest big city if the heroes are in the countryside.

**SWAT:** As backup (above), but with body armor and rifles, and *not* quiet. AR is at -5 if made “just because,” +5 if the brass sent the heroes into a dangerous situation.

**Technical Means:** Communications intercepts for a specific target, plaintext of a code broken on a supercomputer, satellite recon of a specific locale, etc. AR is *often* at -1 to -5.

Success means the data arrive electronically or by courier in a day. Real-time drone surveillance takes only 1d hours to set up *if* available.

**Transportation:** Ordinary commercial transportation relevant to mission. Can usually be arranged almost in real time over the phone!

**Warrant:** A *legal* warrant to search premises, plant wiretaps (-5 to AR if the target isn’t a known criminal or terrorist), etc. Arrangements take 1d hours at day but 1d+8 hours at night (fewer judges!).

## Availability by Service

*Intelligence:* Cash (to buy information); facilities; false ID; files (dossiers on enemy spies, maps, etc.); insertion/extraction; replacement gear; safe house; technical means; transportation.

*Law Enforcement:* Aerial surveillance; backup; bailout; cash (for bribes); facilities; files (case report, criminal jacket, etc.); forensics; medevac; records search; replacement gear; SWAT; transportation; warrant.

*Military:* Base access; files (maps, technical manuals, etc.); facilities; fire support; insertion/extraction; medevac; replacement gear; technical means; transportation.

*Security:* Aerial surveillance; backup; bailout; disappearance (requires 15-point Legal Enforcement Powers); facilities; files (dossiers on terrorists); forensics; medevac; records search; replacement gear; SWAT; transportation; warrant.

## RESULTS OF SUCCESS

If the heroes requested *information* (files, forensics, records search, etc.), treat their organization as though it were a Contact Group (p. B44) with effective skill 18, and make a skill roll. Success means the PCs get what they need. Reliability is “Somewhat Reliable” – if the skill roll fails, those at home base draw a blank. On a skill roll of 18, someone decides that the request was above the PCs’ clearance or pay grade! Instead of aid, their service’s equivalent of Internal Affairs or CID shows up to complicate the adventure.

If the heroes asked for anything more substantial (backup, cash, transportation, etc.), their employer serves as a Patron (p. B72). Treat it as a “powerful organization” in all cases – the CIA or USMC might outclass the LAPD, but individuals and squads can at most reach one or two steps up the chain of command.

## Legal Enforcement Powers

This advantage’s benefits apply when the user is in his jurisdiction (one city or county for 5 points, a nation for 10 or 15 points) *and* conducting himself properly (showing his badge, demanding surrender before shooting, etc.). In the movies, this lets heroes get away with many things that would land most people – even card-carrying spies and soldiers – in hot water. Simply flashing his badge and delivering a canned speech gives him +3 to all reaction or Influence rolls made to order ordinary citizens to step aside, hand over a vehicle, tell him which way the bad guy went, etc. Other authorities won’t hassle him when he pulls a concealed weapon or when the bad guy he’s fighting falls three stories

onto a noodle cart; in fact, he gets the same +3 to convince them to help! *None* of this requires an Assistance Roll.

Benefits of the 15-point version over the 10-point one are that it lets the agent engineer a bailout regardless of what he was arrested for, arrange for people to disappear, and request access to sinister facilities like brainwashing chambers. These things *do* require an AR. He can conduct searches and plant bugs without making an AR for a warrant, however.

Again, *none* of this has much to do with real life. It’s just how things work in the movies!

# CHAPTER FOUR

# GEAR

Action heroes love their *stuff*. **GURPS High-Tech** is the catalog of modern-day kit (including *lots* of guns) – serious action fans will want that book. Below is a summary of key items. It's useful even to gamers who own the **Basic Set** and **High-Tech**, because it pre-calculates, simplifies, and/or updates numerous stats.

*Tech Level:* **GURPS Action** apes movies set in the 1990s and 2000s, so it assumes TL8 gear and skills. While TL8 starts in 1980, many of its iconic gadgets weren't available in the 80s. Still, the equipment list is probably suitable for *technothriller*

games set in the 80s, since such stories feature cutting-edge gadgetry. The GM may make electronics like cell phones and targeting lasers 50% to 100% heavier in early TL8 campaigns.

*Batteries:* Tracking detailed power usage isn't much fun in an action game. Assume that the heroes start each excursion from HQ with fresh batteries – and that most noncombat gadgets have adapters for mains current. Battery failure is a common plot device, though, so durations appear for hardware that runs down batteries quickly. A team willing to buy and carry \$3 and 1 lb. of spare cells *per team member per day away from base* can avoid this fate.

## TOOLS AND GADGETS

Heroes can obtain most reusable equipment (*not* single-use items like explosives!) with several modifiers – all “stackable” except as noted, but not all available for every gadget. Each modifier notes a “cost factor” (CF). To find *final* cost, multiply list cost by (1 + total CF); e.g., a cutting-edge (+1 CF), rugged (+1 CF) camera is 1 + 1 + 1 = 3 times cost. Weight effects multiply together; e.g., that camera has 0.8 times weight.

*Cutting-Edge:* Made of the latest materials. Multiply weight by 2/3. Any item: +1 CF.

*Disguised:* The item resembles something else of similar shape; e.g., handcuffs that look like a chunky bracelet. Discovering the hidden function requires a Search roll. Any item: +4 CF.

*Fine-Quality\*:* Gives +2 to operation skill, or adds +2 to existing modifier. If quality affects weight, ×20 weight. Any item but labs or tool kits (their bonus depends on size): +19 CF.

*Good-Quality\*:* Gives +1 to operation skill, or adds +1 to existing modifier. If quality affects weight, ×5 weight. Any item but labs or tool kits: +4 CF.

*Rugged:* Shockproof and waterproof, giving +2 to rolls to avoid breakage, water damage, etc. Multiply weight by 1.2. Any item: +1 CF.

*Styled:* Hand-tooled, gold-plated, etc. Gives a reaction or Influence roll bonus *if* the item is the focus of the action. Any item: +1 bonus for +1 CF, +2 for +4 CF, and +3 for +9 CF.

\* Good- and fine-quality are mutually exclusive.

## ARSON AND DEMOLITION

Explosives gear *requires* Explosives (Demolition). To multiply explosives damage by N, use (N × N) times as much; e.g., to quadruple the damage for dynamite, use 16 sticks.

*Anybody* can commit arson, but roll vs. Explosives to avoid unintended disasters.

*Blasting Caps.* Needed to trigger explosives! Choose fuse (requires fire) *or* electrical wire (requires exploder, remote, or timer). Each does 1d-2 cr ex by itself. Six: \$10, 0.25 lb.

*Cigarette Lighter.* \$10, neg.

*Dynamite.* 80% nitro. Does 9d+1 cr ex damage. Stick: \$5, 0.5 lb.

*Exploder.* Can detonate up to 50 blasting caps wired to it. \$50, 0.75 lb.

*Extrudable Explosive.* For squeezing into a door's seams and locks. Detonation does 7d cr ex, and inflicts the *maximum* 42 points on the door! Tube: \$10, 0.3 lb.

*Gasoline.* Gallon: \$3, 6 lbs.

*Plastique.* Detected at -8 by dogs, chemical sensors, etc. Does 5d×3 cr ex damage. Self-adhesive block: \$40, 1.25 lb.

*Remote.* Matched transmitter-receiver pair can detonate blasting cap at 5 miles. \$50, 1 lb.

*Thermite.* Burns hot enough to cut steel. Does 3d burn/second to anything touching it, treating *all* DR as semi-ablative! Burns for 25 seconds. Application: \$40, 1 lb.

*Timer.* Electronic clock can detonate blasting cap at specified time. \$25, 0.5 lb.

## BURGLAR'S TOOLS

Heroes use this gear for stealthy break-ins, although much of it also has legitimate applications. Less-stealthy operators should also see *Tools* (p. 30).

*Circle Cutter.* Suction cup-mounted blade removes a perfect circle of glass (window, display case, etc.) on a Forced Entry-6 roll. Failure breaks glass *noisily*. \$140, 1 lb.



*Drill, Cordless.* For drilling holes for endoscopes and pin-head mikes. Does 1d+2(2) pi++ per second (per 5 seconds if being stealthy). Runs for 30 minutes. \$50, 2 lbs.

*Files, Diamond.* Carbide teeth can *quietly* cut a hasp, padlock, etc., in (DR + HP)/2 minutes. Set: \$35, 1 lb.

*Hydraulic Door Opener.* Hand-pumped jack *silently* forces doors. Each use (takes 3 seconds) inflicts 10d cr damage on the door. \$1,500, 9 lbs.

*Lockpicks.* Basic equipment for Lockpicking. Quality affects weight. \$50, 0.1 lb.

*Lockpicks, Electronic.* Basic equipment for Electronics Operation (Security) to *defeat* electronic locks and security systems. \$1,500, 3 lbs.

*Search Endoscope.* Passed through a hole in a safe or a door; this lets the user view the lock mechanism: +2 to Lockpicking. \$1,500, 2 lbs.

*Stethoscope, Electronic.* Basic equipment for Lockpicking when cracking safes. \$300, 0.4 lb.

*Wire Cutters.* Do 2d(2) cut to cables, barbed wire, etc. \$30, 2 lbs.

## COMBAT ACCESSORIES

Sights and scopes *cannot* be made higher-quality to raise Acc or skill bonus. Holsters and slings *are* improvable; the bonus aids Fast-Draw or Holdout (never both).

*Earmuffs.* Give Protected Hearing. \$100, 1 lb.

*Gas Mask.* Gives Filter Lungs, Immunity to Eye/Nose Irritants, and DR 2 on the eyes and face – but also No Sense of Smell/Taste and No Peripheral Vision. \$250, 2 lbs.

*Goggles, Tactical.* Give Nictitating Membrane 5. \$100, neg.

## Standard (and Not-so-Standard) Issue

**GURPS Action** assumes that heroes *don't* normally buy gear with starting money. They can live in whatever style they like “off the clock” – watch three cop movies and you'll see three officers at the same pay grade living in a shotgun shack, a houseboat, and a fancy condo, all of whom nevertheless have virtually the same equipment. Watch a military action movie and you won't even see the soldiers' home lives! Thus, most PCs shouldn't take Wealth (p. B25) other than Average. Instead, there are other options.

### Budgets

In most action games, the heroes draw their gear from their organization – it isn't theirs, but their employer's. Even criminals follow *this* rule; the equipment (no doubt the avails of crime) belongs to the crew, and personal kit is off-limits because it's easily traced. Thus, most teams have a budget. The GM sets this figure, but here's a suggestion:

*Starting Budget:* \$20,000 × (number of PCs on team).

*Replacement Budget:* \$4,000 × (number of PCs on team).

*Starting budget* buys the crew's initial gear. If the heroes hold Rank, everyone creates a “wish list” but the team member of highest Rank makes the final call. If there's no leader or no Rank, the GM should let each PC spend an equal share – but everyone should set aside something to pool for major expenses, notably vehicles.

*Replacement budget* becomes available at the start of the second and later adventures. It's used to replenish ammunition, replace destroyed vehicles, and acquire specialized tools to meet new challenges. Spending it works the same way.

Budgets aren't cash but the nominal value of the squad's hardware. Holding a fraction for later, discretionary use is fine – but this represents departmental pull, a note with Guido the Fence, etc., not money.

### Signature Gear

Heroes may pay 1 point per \$10,000 in Signature Gear (p. B85). This stuff *is* personal – usually distinctive

hardware such as Ferraris and very fine .50-caliber rifles. It comes with the standard promise from the GM that you won't often be without it, plus *one* of these guarantees:

- If you're a private citizen (criminal, mercenary, PI, etc.), your foes can't trace it, in the tradition of cinematic gangsters with extraordinary firearms and cars that would be instantly recognizable in reality.
- If you belong to an organization, your bosses won't hassle you about non-issue gear. (Harry Callahan's .44 Magnum probably wasn't department-issue!)

### Personal Wealth

Those who don't belong to a team – true independents who bankroll their own operations – *do* buy gear out of pocket and *can* take Wealth as usual. They're at no disadvantage against other PCs: starting money is \$20,000 in a modern-day game, the same as the default budget, for 0 points.

Heroes *on a team with a budget* who insist on buying personal gear should be allowed to do so. However, the guarantees of Signature Gear are then reversed:

- Privately owned gear is traceable. If you keep it after using it for espionage, a heist, etc., you acquire a Trade-mark for which you receive no points. Anyone investigating you gets +2 to skill. If they catch up with you, and what you did is illegal, the evidence may convict you.
- If you belong to an organization, your bosses *will* hassle you for using non-issue gear. Assistance Rolls are at -2 because you're a troublemaker. If you're a cop, you suffer -2 to Law (Police) rolls made to keep your police work admissible in court. If caught with the gear, your options are confiscation or resignation.

### Pocket Money

In any campaign, ignore salaries and cost of living, and assume that each PC has \$2,000/month for bribes, donuts, etc., should it matter. Players who want to take above-average Wealth to improve *this* may do so.

*Holster, Belt.* For pistols. \$25, 0.5 lb.

*Holster, Shoulder.* For pistols. Enables Holdout, but gives -1 to Fast-Draw. \$50, 1 lb.

*Holster, Sleeve.* Spring-loaded gizmo delivers a pistol of Bulk 0 or -1 on a Fast-Draw (Pistol) roll. Entire combo has only -2 to Holdout. \$500, 0.5 lb.

*Holster, Undercover.* Conceals a pistol: +1 to Holdout, -1 to Fast-Draw. \$125, 1 lb.

*Load-Bearing Vest.* Carries 20 lbs. of small articles. Ready an item takes a Ready maneuver – or is a free action with a suitable Fast-Draw roll. Quality bonuses affect DX and Fast-Draw rolls to reach items. \$30, 2 lbs. (add \$150, 3 lbs. for built-in flotation: +6 to Swimming rolls to avoid drowning).

*Scope, Thermal Imaging.* Gives +2 Acc and Infravision. Runs for 2 hours. \$10,000, 1 lb.

*Scopes.* Give +1 to +5 Acc after aiming for seconds equal to bonus. Also gather light (remove -1 from darkness penalties) but interfere with quick shots (-1 to Bulk). \$150 per +1 Acc (max. +5), 1 lb.

*Sight, Night.* Adds Night Vision 7 to the benefits of another scope or sight. \$1,500, 1 lb.

*Sight, Reflex.* “Red dot” sight gives +1 to Guns out to 300 yards and negates up to -3 in darkness penalties. Not cumulative with targeting laser! \$550, 0.25 lb.

*Silencers.* Give -1 to -4 to hear the gun fire, but also -1 to Bulk. \$250 per -1 to Hearing (max. -4), 1 lb. (pistol or SMG) or 1.5 lbs. (most rifles); silencer for a .50 rifle gives -2 to Bulk and is \$400 per -1, 5 lbs.

*Tactical Lights, Small:* Any gun; 25-yard beam for 2 hours. \$100, 0.25 lb. *Large:* Any gun but pistol; 100-yard beam for 2 hours. \$200, 0.5 lb.

*Tactical Sling.* Drop your shoulder arm without losing it! Retrieve it with a Ready maneuver or a Fast-Draw (Long Arm) roll at +1. Can also be used to brace during Aim, for the usual +1. \$50, 2 lbs.

*Targeting Lasers.* Give +1 to Guns out to a certain range. *Sidearm:* 150 yards. \$150, 0.25 lb. *Long Arm:* 750 yards. \$750, 0.5 lb.

## COMMUNICATORS

Make an Electronics Operation (Communications) roll if there's reason to doubt that the signal will get through.

*Laser Comm.* Tight-beam infrared communicator can't be intercepted by radio! 1-mile range. Runs for 4 hours. \$1,000, 0.75 lb.

*Phone, Cell.* Higher-quality versions don't improve skill but can have one built-in gadget (camera, GPS, PDA, etc.) per full \$100 added value. Runs for 6 hours. \$100, 0.5 lb.

*Phone, Satellite.* Global range. Runs for 4 hours. \$1,000, 1 lb.

*Radio, Backpack.* 35-mile range. Runs for 30 hours. \$2,000, 8 lbs.

*I dropped twenty floors down on  
a McNeal descender.*

– Virginia Baker, *Entrapment*

*Radio, Compact.* 2-mile range. Runs for 10 hours. \$50, 0.25 lb.

*Radio, Handset.* 5-mile range. Runs for 10 hours. \$250, 0.5 lb.

## Communicator Options

One special modification is available for communicators:

*Secure:* The signal is encrypted for security. Any communicator: +1 CF.

As well, any communicator can have a hands-free headset:

*Headset, Concealable.* Wireless! \$300, 0.5 lb.

*Headset, Tactical.* Voice-activated and gives Protected Hearing, but *obvious*. \$200, 1 lb.

## COMPUTERS

*Desktop.* With speakers, mike, webcam, modem, etc. Complexity 3. \$1,500, 17 lbs.

*Notebook.* With wireless. -1 to skill for long tasks. Complexity 3. Runs for 5 hours. \$2,100, 2.5 lbs.

*PDA.* -2 to skill for long tasks. Complexity 1. Runs for 5 hours. \$100, 0.1 lb.

## CRIMINAL TRICKERY

*Counterfeiting/Forgery Kit.* Camera, embossers, high-resolution printer and scanner, plastic card printer, strip encoder, and a crate of stationery are *basic* equipment for either skill – and this doesn't include the computer! \$12,000, 100 lbs.

*Disguise Kit.* Basic equipment for Disguise. Quality affects weight. \$200, 10 lbs.

*Industrial Cleanser.* Roll vs. Housekeeping to remove biological evidence. Enough to clean up behind one killing: \$5, 1 lb.

*Jammer.* Neutralizes bugs, radio communicators, and remote detonators. To use these devices, anyone in range must win a Quick Contest of Electronics Operation – usually Communications – with the jammer's operator. 2-mile range. \$5,000, 25 lbs.

*Voice Modulator.* Alters user's voice, making it sound like almost anything (but *not* anyone in particular). \$350, 1 lb.

## INSERTION/EXTRACTION AIDS

*Climbing Kit.* Harness, ascender, descender, fasteners, and 100 yards of 3/8" rope. Quality bonuses affect Climbing. \$400, 26 lbs.

*Grapnel.* Non-sparking and padded for stealth! Throw to STx2 yards using Throwing. Supports 600 lbs. \$40, 3 lbs.

*Ladder, Portable.* A 30' ladder with hooks. No Climbing roll required, once attached. Fits in a pack. \$100, 5 lbs.

*Parachutes.* Use Parachuting skill. Wearer descends at 5 yards/second. *Mini:* Opens after 40 yards; supports 150 lbs. \$1,000, 8 lbs. *Ram-Air:* State-of-the-art military chute, capable of maneuvering. Opens after 80 yards; supports 400 lbs. \$3,500, 25 lbs.

*Rappelling Kit.* For descents only! Harness, carabiner, descender, and 33 yards of 1/4" rope in a belt pouch. Quality bonuses affect Climbing. \$150, 3 lbs.

*Rope, 1/4".* Supports 500 lbs. Per 10 yards: \$30, 0.6 lb.

*Rope, 3/8".* Supports 650 lbs. Per 10 yards: \$25, 1.6 lbs.

*Scuba Gear.* Basic equipment for Scuba: wetsuit (DR 1), mask, fins, belt, 90-minute tank, regulator, etc. \$1,500, 45 lbs. (add \$1,000, 1 lb. for ultrasonic communicator with 3,000-yard underwater range that runs for 4 hours).

*Suction Cups.* Let a climber who weighs up to 200 lbs. with gear use Climbing on a smooth, vertical surface (like a skyscraper) with no -3 to skill. Set: \$240, 9 lbs.

*Winch.* Portable, one-man hoist reels rope in or out at 3 yards/second. Fuel cartridge (\$100, 2 lbs.) powers an ascent of 200 yards. Capacity is 300 lbs. \$8,000, 7 lbs.

## LABS AND SCIENTIFIC GEAR

*Geiger Counter.* Useful for finding terrorist nukes! Runs for 10 hours. \$400, 0.5 lb.

*Lab, Field.* Gives +1 to one skill: Chemistry, Forensics, etc. \$15,000, 200 lbs.

*Lab, Mobile.* As field lab, but +2 to chosen skill. \$75,000, 2,000 lbs.

*Lab, Suitcase.* Basic equipment for one skill: Chemistry, Forensics, etc. \$3,000, 20 lbs.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY

All “detectors” require Electronics Operation (Security) to use.

*Bug Detector.* Detects the presence of transmitters and mikes, and can pinpoint them by *winning* a Quick Contest vs. the Electronics Operation (Surveillance) skill of the person who hid the bug. Quality affects weight. \$500, 1 lb.

*Chemical Detector, Portable.* Can sense chemical weapons, drugs, or explosives at 1'. Runs for 12 hours. \$60,000, 6 lbs.

*Evidence Collection Kit.* Basic equipment for collecting evidence (bullets, prints, etc.) at a crime scene. \$150, 10 lbs.

*Flex Cuffs.* DR 1, HP 2. -1 to Escape. Bundle of 10: \$5, 0.25 lb.

*Handcuffs.* DR 4, HP 6. -5 to Escape. \$50, 0.5 lb.

*Metal Detector Wand.* Gives +1 to find metal items with Explosives (EOD), Search, and Traps – cumulative with other bonuses – and negates bonus of undercover clothing. Runs for 10 hours. \$250, 1 lb.

*Spike Strip.* Single-use car barrier punctures the tires of a car driving over it, deflating them (-4 to Handling, *halve* Top Speed) in five seconds. Per yard: \$100, 1 lb.

*Truth Serum.* Make a Physician roll to administer. After 30 seconds, the subject must make a HT-1 roll or have -2 to Will and self-control rolls for (20 - HT)/2 minutes. Dose: \$10, neg.

## LIGHT SOURCES

*Flare, Hand.* Illuminates 5-yard radius for 30 minutes. An excellent fire-starter! \$5, 1 lb.

*Flare, Signal.* Disposable launcher shoots bright flare to 70 yards. Roll vs. Traps to rig it as a “trip flare.” \$15, 0.1 lb.

*Flashlights. Heavy:* 10-yard beam for 50 hours. \$20, 1 lb. *Mini:* 5-yard beam for 10 hours. \$10, 0.25 lb.

*Glow Stick.* Chemical light illuminates 2-yard radius for 12 hours. \$2, 0.1 lb.

*Lantern, Electric.* Illuminates 5-yard radius for 20 hours. \$30, 3 lbs.

## LUGGAGE

*Attaché Case.* Holds 20 lbs. of small and/or flat things. \$20, 2 lbs.

*Backpack, Small.* Holds 50 lbs. of gear. Quality bonuses offset Stealth penalties for encumbrance. \$120, 1.5 lbs.

*Drag Bag.* Protects one sniper rifle, accessories, and ammo while climbing, sneaking, etc. When opened, serves as a mat for sniping. Often given the camouflage modifiers available for clothing (p. 31). \$250, 4 lbs.

## MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

*Antitoxin Kit.* Gives +4 to HT rolls vs. a specific, *common* poison. Dose: \$10, 0.5 lb.

*Body Bag.* \$5, 2.5 lbs. One rated for safely removing a plague corpse (or a body you don't want dogs to track) is \$100, 5 lbs.

*Crash Kit.* Counts as basic equipment for Physician *and* improvised equipment (-5) for Surgery, and gives +2 to First Aid. \$200, 10 lbs.

*Defibrillator.* Gives +3 to resuscitation rolls (p. B425); e.g., when stabilizing a mortal wound fails (p. B424). As an improvised weapon, treat as a stun gun that allows a HT-4 roll. Freshly charged, it has 20 “shots.” \$10,000, 15 lbs.

*First Aid Kit.* Basic equipment for First Aid. Quality affects weight. \$10, 1 lb.

*Surgical Kit.* Basic equipment for Surgery (gets +2 for TL; see p. B424). \$300, 15 lbs.

## OPTICS

This gear requires no special skill, but Observation yields more information. All of these items grant vision-related traits while used.

*Binoculars. Civilian:* Telescopic Vision 3. \$150, 3 lbs. *Military:* Glint-free coating. Telescopic Vision 4. \$800, 3.5 lbs. *Night-Vision:* Night Vision 9, Telescopic Vision 4, and Colorblindness. Run for 20 hours. \$6,000, 3 lbs. *Thermal-Imaging:* Infravision, Telescopic Vision 3, and Colorblindness. Run for 4 hours. \$7,000, 3 lbs.

*Goggles, Night Vision.* Hands-free. Give Night Vision 9 – but also Colorblindness, No Depth Perception, and No Peripheral Vision. Run for 20 hours. \$3,500, 1.5 lbs.

*Goggles, Thermal-Imaging.* Hands-free. Give Infravision and Telescopic Vision 2 – but also Colorblindness, No Depth Perception, and No Peripheral Vision. Run for 2 hours. \$13,000, 1.5 lbs.

*Spotting Scope.* Glint-free coating. With small tripod. Gives Telescopic Vision 5. \$300, 10 lbs.

## PERSONAL ACCESSORIES

*Business Cards.* Per 100: \$1, neg.

*Compass.* Gives +1 to Navigation. \$25, neg.

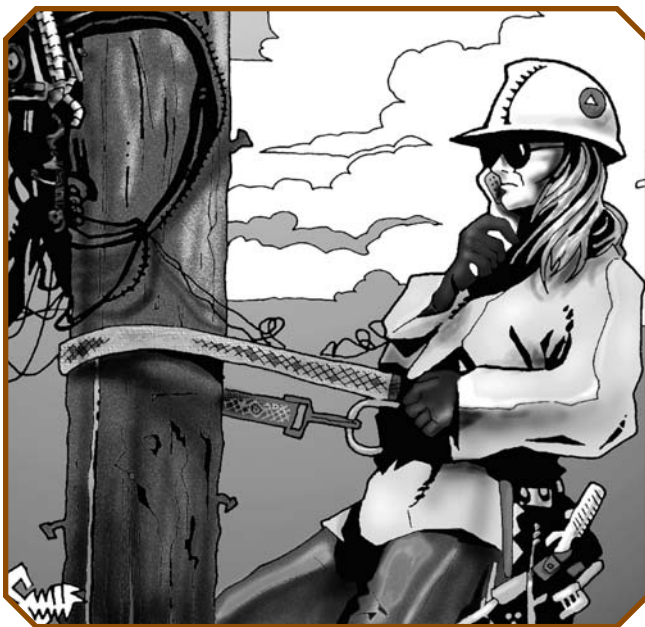
*GPS Receiver.* Gives +3 to Navigation. \$100, 0.25 lb.

*Multi-Tool.* “Leatherman” or similar belt tool counts as improvised gear (-5) for most repairs. \$50, 0.5 lb.

*Space Pen.* Can write anywhere, even underwater. \$25, neg.

*Sunglasses.* Look awesome, and give Protected Vision vs. bright ordinary light and DR 1 over the eyes. \$10, neg. (*ballistic* ones with DR 4 are \$35, neg.).





*Whistle.* For signaling. \$5, neg.

*Wristwatch.* High-quality versions don't improve skills but can have one built-in gadget (compass, camera, GPS, etc.) per full \$100 added value. \$25, neg.

## SPY AND SURVEILLANCE GADGETS

Proper use of this gear to record useful intelligence – as opposed to record a TV show or whatever – requires Electronics Operation (Surveillance).

*Audio Recorder, Digital.* Holdout +1. Runs for 12 hours. \$100, 0.25 lb.

*Camcorders, Digital.* These can record *indefinitely* when linked to a computer with external power. *Full-Sized:* Gives Night Vision 3, Telescopic Vision 2. Runs for 1 hour. \$500, 1 lb. *Miniature:* No vision advantages, but Holdout +2. Runs for 1 hour. \$200, 0.25 lb.

*Cameras, Digital. Full-Sized:* Basic equipment for Photography. Runs for 10 hours. Quality affects weight, and fine camera is a digital SLR that can accept a telephoto lens (Telescopic Vision 5, \$500, 8.5 lbs.). \$75, 0.5 lb. *Miniature:* Can take high-quality stills of documents. Holdout +1. \$500, 0.1 lb.

*Cellular Monitoring System.* Monitors up to four cell phones at once, logging, jamming, and/or tracing their calls. In heavy case: \$20,000, 7 lbs.

*Computer Monitoring System.* Reads video displays from radio emissions. In the city, effective range is 100 yards. Requires a Complexity 3 computer. \$5,000, 6 lbs.

*Mike, Laser.* Eavesdrops through glass. 900-yard range. \$5,000, 2 lbs.

*Mike, Shotgun.* With headphones. Gives Parabolic Hearing 3. Runs for 10 hours. \$800, 3 lbs.

*Scanner Pen.* Resembles a pen. Scans a page in 4 seconds. Stores 100 pages in memory. \$150, 0.1 lb.

*Surveillance Endoscope.* A yard-long fiber optic for stealthily peering under doors, around corners, etc. Spotting the protruding tube requires a Vision-5 roll. \$4,500, 2 lbs.

*Thru-Wall Radar.* Can see through wood, brick, or gypsum 1' thick and spot things 20 yards beyond. Range is less than 1' through concrete. Runs for 3 hours. \$30,000, 10 lbs.

*TV Set, Mini.* A 7" flat-panel, used as a spare monitor by hackers and wire rats. Runs for 4 hours. \$100, 2 lbs.

*Video Recorder, Digital.* Good or fine model can be linked to a Complexity 3 computer for media manipulation with Electronics Operation (Media). \$200, 10 lbs.

*Wire Rat Kit.* Heavy case has a 40-channel audiovisual transceiver (controls 40 bugs, trackers, etc., and can feed signals to computers and recorders) in one half and enough gear enough for a serious surveillance job packed in the other: 10 audio bugs (SM -13, 1/2-mile range, 1 month endurance), 10 contact mikes (SM -11, self-adhesive, 1 week endurance), 2 generic transmitters (makes *any* attached camera, mike, etc., a bug, 1/2-mile range, 4 hours endurance), 2 headphone sets, 10 keyboard bugs (transmit by phone or Internet), 2 microphones (full-sized), 10 phone taps, 10 pinhead mikes (SM -16, 8-yard cable manipulated with DX-based roll), 4 spike mikes (give Parabolic Hearing 4 into *adjacent* room when driven into wall), 5 tracking beacons (25-mile range, 1 month endurance), and 10 video bugs (SM -9, 2-mile range, 1 week endurance). \$10,000, 40 lbs.

## TOOLS

These are heavier tools. Some are intended for repairs; others are used to attack doors, locks, etc., with Forced Entry. See *Burglar's Tools* (pp. 26-27) for stealthier break-in gear.

*Bolt Cutters.* For cutting padlocks and chains. *Light:* 8d(2) cut. \$30, 15 lbs. *Heavy:* 12d(2) cut. \$50, 30 lbs.

*Chainsaw.* Carbide teeth do swing+1d cut per second. \$300, 13 lbs.

*Crowbar, 3'.* Treat as a small mace in combat, at -1 to skill. \$20, 3 lbs.

*Cutting Torches. Full-Sized:* 1d+3(2) burn per second, \$75, 7 lbs. (gas bottle good for 30 seconds: \$50, 5 lbs.). *Pocket:* 1d-2 burn per second, \$25, neg. (gas bottle good for 20 minutes: \$1, neg.).

*Duct Tape.* As a restraint: ST-3 or Escape roll to break free. 60-yard roll: \$1, 2 lbs.

*Fire Axe.* Gives +1 to Forced Entry. Treat as a great axe in combat. \$100, 8 lbs.

*Go-Bar.* Gives +1 to Forced Entry. Treat as a maul in combat, at -2 to skill. \$175, 17 lbs.

*Hacksaw.* Carbide blade does sw-2(2) cut per second to bars, chains, and cables. \$10, 2 lbs.

*Hand Ram.* Miniature battering ram does sw+3d+1 cr every *three* seconds. Not useful as a weapon. \$150, 35 lbs.

*Shovel, Folding.* Treat as an axe in combat, at -2 to skill. Holdout -4. \$10, 3 lbs.

*Sledgehammer.* Treat as a maul in combat, at -2 to skill. \$10, 15 lbs.

*Tool Kit, Mini.* Belt-sized and simplistic: -2 to skill. For Armoury, Electrician, Explosives, Machinist, or Mechanic: \$200, 4 lbs. For Electronics Repair: \$400, 2 lbs.

*Tool Kit, Portable.* Basic equipment for *one* of Armoury, Electrician, Explosives, Machinist, or Mechanic: \$600, 20 lbs. For Electronics Repair: \$1,200, 10 lbs.

*Tool Kit, Shop.* As portable kit, but +2 to skill. For Armoury, etc.: \$15,000, 2,000 lbs. For Electronics Repair: \$30,000, 500 lbs.

# ARMOR AND CLOTHING

Any TL0-8 armor from pp. B283-285 or *GURPS High-Tech* might exist in an action campaign, but action heroes usually either go without armor or wear TL7-8 protection. The *Armor Table* summarizes the most common garb, using the notation explained on p. B282.

Several modifiers exist for armor and clothing. These have “cost factors” (CF) that affect cost as explained for tools and gadgets (p. 26).

*Camouflage\**: Helps the wearer hide in *one specific setting* (desert, urban night, etc.), giving a Camouflage bonus but also -1 to reactions in most nonmilitary settings. Armor or clothing: +1 for +0 CF, +2 for +1 CF, +3 for +2 CF.

*Disguised*: Armor that wouldn’t normally resemble ordinary clothing can be tailored so that it does. Discovering the truth requires a Search roll. Armor: +4 CF.

*Styled\**: The most common clothing enhancement! Gives a reaction or Influence roll bonus whenever the GM feels that being well-dressed would count. Clothing: +1 bonus for +1 CF, +2 for +4 CF, and +3 for +9 CF.

*Undercover*: Helps the wearer conceal weapons, giving a Holdout bonus. Armor or clothing: +1 bonus for +4 CF, +2 for +19 CF.

\* Camouflage and styled are mutually exclusive.

## Clothing and Armor Table

Armor	Location	DR	Cost	Weight	Notes
Boots, Reinforced	feet	3/2	\$75	3	[1, 2]
Clothing, Formal	all	0	\$240	2	[1]
Clothing, High-Fashion	all	0	\$3,000	1.4	[1]
Clothing, Ordinary	all	0	\$120	2	[1]
Coat, Long	arms, legs, torso	0	\$50	5	[1, 3]
Coat, Long Leather	arms, legs, torso	1*	\$250	10	[1, 3]
Collar, Reinforced	neck	2	\$10	0.5	[1]
Cup, Athletic	groin	2/1F	\$20	neg.	[1, 4]
Gloves, Sap	hands	2*	\$60	1	[1, 5]
Gloves, Shooting	hands	1*	\$50	0.5	[1]
Hat, Leather	skull	1*	\$60	0.5	[1]
Helmet, Ballistic	skull	12	\$250	3	
+ Visor	eyes, face	10	+\$200	+1.4	[6]
Helmet, Motorcycle	head	6/3	\$200	3	[1, 4]
+ Visor	eyes, face	1	+\$50	+0.5	[1]
Jacket, Leather	arms, torso	1*	\$50	4	[1]
Leggings, Ballistic	legs	12/5F*	\$400	8	[7]
NBC Suit	full suit	1*	\$150	3.5	[8]
Pants, Leather	legs, groin	1*	\$40	4	[1]
Shoes	feet	1*	\$40	2	[1]
Shoes, Climbing	feet	1*	\$80	1	[1, 9]
Sleeves, Ballistic	arms	8/2*	\$200	5	[7]
Vest, Advanced	torso	35/5*	\$4,600	17	[1, 10]
Vest, Assault	torso, groin	12/5*	\$900	8	[7]
+ Trauma Plates	torso	+23	+\$600	+8	
Vest, Concealable	torso	12/5*	\$1,000	2	[1, 7]

## Notes

[1] Concealable *under* clothing, or *is* clothing. Items *without* this note draw suspicion unless you’re doing your job in the army, on a SWAT team, etc.: -2 to reactions!

[2] Use higher DR only vs. attacks to underside of foot. Give +1 to kicking damage.

[3] Gives +4 to Holdout.

[4] Use higher DR vs. *crushing* attacks, lower DR vs. *all other damage types*.

[5] Weighted. Give +1 to punching damage and Bad Grip 1.

[6] Gives Protected Vision.

[7] Use higher DR vs. *piercing* and *cutting* attacks, lower DR vs. *all other damage types*.

[8] Requires NBC Suit skill. Worn with a gas mask, gives Sealed. Suit’s DR applies only vs. *burning* or *corrosion* damage.

[9] Rubber soles give +1 to Climbing and Stealth.

[10] Use lower DR versus *crushing attacks only*.



# WEAPONS

Any TL0-8 weapon from pp. B271-281, *GURPS High-Tech*, or *GURPS Martial Arts* is possible – but with the exception of knives and batons, TL7-8 guns dominate. Below are tables containing popular choices, using the notation from pp. B268-271.

Customization modifiers exist for weapons, too. These have “cost factors” (CF) that alter cost according to the rules for tools and gadgets (p. 26).

*Disguised*: The weapon resembles any innocent item that could conceal it; e.g., a knife built into a belt buckle. Finding the hidden weapon requires a Search roll. Any weapon: +4 CF.

*Fine*\*: Gives any firearm with base Acc 2 or better another +1 Acc. Guns: +1 CF.

*Styled*: Pearl grips, gold plating, etc. Gives a reaction or Influence roll bonus in scenes where it's the center of attention. Any weapon: +1 bonus for +1 CF, +2 for +4 CF, and +3 for +9 CF.

*Very Fine*\*: Gives any firearm with base Acc 4 or better another +2 Acc. Guns: +4 CF.

\* Fine and very fine are mutually exclusive.

## Firearms Table

Weapon	Damage	Acc	Range	Weight	RoF	Shots	ST	Bulk	Rcl	Cost	Notes
<b>GUNS (GRENADE LAUNCHER) (DX-4 or most other Guns at -4)</b>											
Grenade Launcher, 40mm	6d+2 [2d] cr ex	1	30/440	6.3/0.5	1	1(3)	8†	-4	2	\$1,550/\$10	[1]
<b>GUNS (PISTOL) (DX-4 or most other Guns at -2)</b>											
Auto Backup Pistol, .40	2d+1 pi+	1	140/1,600	1.9/0.4	3	6+1(3)	8	-1	2	\$720/\$2(\$37)	
Auto Pistol, .40	2d+2 pi+	2	160/1,800	2.3/0.6	3	13+1(3)	9	-2	2	\$770/\$4(\$32)	
Auto Pistol, .45	2d pi+	2	175/1,700	2.4/0.8	3	13+1(3)	10	-2	3	\$600/\$7(\$32)	
Auto Pistol, .50AE	4d pi+	2	220/2,500	4.6/0.6	3	7+1(3)	12	-4	4	\$1,250/\$8(\$45)	
Auto Pistol, 9mm	2d+2 pi	2	160/1,800	1.9/0.6	3	17+1(3)	8	-2	2	\$600/\$5(\$32)	
Revolver, .357M	3d pi	2	190/2,100	2.9/0.3	3	6(6)	10	-2	3	\$850/\$3(\$10)	
Revolver, .38	2d pi	2	110/1,200	2/0.3	3	6(6)	9	-2	2	\$500/\$2(\$10)	
Revolver, .44M	3d+2 pi+	2	210/2,300	3.1/0.4	3	6(6)	11	-3	4	\$770/\$4(\$10)	
Snub Revolver, .38	2d-1 pi	1	90/1,000	1.2/0.27	3	5(6)	9	-1	2	\$350/\$2(\$10)	
Taser	1d-3 pi-	0	7	1.1/0.25	1	2(6)	7	-2	2	\$400/\$40	[2]
<i>follow-up</i>	HT-5(0.5) aff										
<b>GUNS (RIFLE) (DX-4 or most other Guns at -2)</b>											
Assault Carbine, 5.56mm	4d+2 pi	4	750/2,900	7.3/1	15	30+1(3)	9†	-4	2	\$950/\$15(\$34)	
Assault Rifle, 5.56mm	5d pi	5	800/3,500	8.9/1	13	30+1(3)	8†	-5	2	\$850/\$15(\$34)	
Sniper Rifle, .50	6d+2 pi+	6+3	1,700/6,500	35/4.4	1	10+1(3)	13B†	-7	3	\$7,775/\$44(\$38)	
Sniper Rifle, 7.62mm	7d pi	5+3	1,000/4,200	15/1	1	10+1(3)	11B†	-6	3	\$2,350/\$9(\$50)	
<b>GUNS (SHOTGUN) (DX-4 or most other Guns at -2)</b>											
Auto Shotgun, 12G	1d+1 pi	3	40/800	8.2/0.8	3×9	7+1(2i)	10†	-5	1/4	\$1,000/\$4	[3]
Compact Pump Shotgun, 12G	1d+1 pi	2	40/800	6.7/0.4	2×9	4+1(2i)	12†	-3	1/6	\$400/\$2	[3]
Pump Shotgun, 12G	1d+1 pi	3	40/800	8.3/0.8	2×9	7+1(2i)	10†	-5	1/5	\$400/\$4	[3]
<b>GUNS (SMG) (DX-4 or most other Guns at -2)</b>											
Compact SMG, 9mm	2d+2 pi	2	160/1,800	3.8/1	15	30+1(3)	8†	-2	2	\$1,200/\$9(\$34)	
SMG, .45	2d+1 pi+	3	160/1,700	6.5/1.6	10	25+1(3)	8†	-4	2	\$900/\$13(\$36)	
SMG, 9mm	3d-1 pi	4	170/1,900	6/1.2	13	30+1(3)	8†	-4	2	\$1,500/\$9(\$29)	
<b>LIQUID PROJECTOR (SPRAYER) (DX-4 or other Liquid Projector-4)</b>											
Pepper Spray	Special	–	2	0.1	1	20	3	-1	–	\$10	[4]

### Notes

[1] First Range is *minimum* range, not 1/2D.

[2] Victim must roll HT-5 or be stunned while trigger is depressed and for (20 - HT) seconds afterward. He can then roll HT-5 to recover.

[3] Shotguns can fire slugs with Damage 5d pi++, +1 to Acc, Range 100/1,200, RoF *without* the multiplier (RoF 2 or 3), and Rcl *after* the slash (Rcl 4, 5, or 6).

[4] Victim must make *two* HT-4 rolls: one to resist coughing (p. B428), another to resist blindness (p. B124). Both endure for minutes equal to margin of failure.



*The rifle is the first weapon you learn how to use, because it lets you keep your distance from the client.*

– Léon, **Léon**

## FIREARMS

The *Firearms Table* adjusts many **Basic Set** weapons to reflect **High-Tech**. It excludes heavy weapons other than a grenade launcher; such hardware rarely suits the urban settings of most action campaigns. When needed, see p. B281.

**Weight** give the weight of one full reload after the slash. For pistols, rifles, and SMGs, this includes the ammo *and* a magazine/speedloader.

**Cost** gives the cost of a full reload after the slash, in round dollars. Cost of a magazine/speedloader appears in parentheses, for guns that accept such (see above).

**Shots** lists reload times in parentheses. This assumes a magazine/speedloader where available. Fast-Draw (Ammo) reduces times by a third: 6 to 4, 3 to 2, etc.

## SPECIAL AMMO

Action heroes *love* custom ammo! These options have “cost factors” (CF) like those for tools and gadgets (p. 26); apply these to reload costs.

**Armor-Piercing\***: Add armor divisor (2) but change damage type: pi++ to pi+, pi+ to pi, and pi to pi- (no effect on pi-). Any pistol, rifle, or SMG: +1 CF.

**Extra-Powerful†**: Add +1 to damage per *three* dice or fraction thereof. Add 10% to Range and ST (minimum +1 ST). Any pistol, rifle, or SMG: +1 CF.

**Hollow-Point\***: Change damage type from pi- to pi, pi to pi+, or pi+ to pi++ (no effect on pi++), but add armor divisor (0.5). Any pistol, rifle, or SMG: +0 CF.

**Match-Grade†**: If weapon has Acc 4 or better, adds another +1 Acc. Any pistol or sniper rifle: +1 CF.

\* Armor-piercing and hollow-point are mutually exclusive.

† Extra-powerful and match-grade are mutually exclusive.

## HAND GRENADES

These are smaller, lighter grenades than those on p. B277 – ideal for urban operators. Pulling the pin is a Ready maneuver. The fuse starts when the arming handle is released (a free action). The throw uses Throwing.

### Melee Weapons Table

Weapon	Damage	Reach	Parry	Cost	Weight	ST	Holdout	Notes
<b>BRAWLING or DX</b>								
Brass Knuckles	thr cr	C	0	\$10	0.25	–	-1	[1]
Stun Gun	HT-3(0.5) aff	C	No	\$25	0.5	2	-1	[2]
Tonfa	thr cr	C	0	\$40	1.5	–	-3	[1]
<b>KNIFE (DX-4, Main-Gauche-3, or Shortsword-3)</b>								
Combat Knife	sw-2 cut	C, 1	-1	\$40	1	6	-2	
or	thr imp	C	-1	–	–	6		
Kukri	sw-1 cut	C, 1	0	\$50	1.5	7	-3	
or	thr-1 imp	C	0	–	–	7		
Push Knife	thr imp	C	-1	\$30	0.5	5	-1	[3]
Switchblade	sw-3 cut	C, 1	No	\$30	0.5	5	0	
or	thr-1 imp	C	No	–	–	5		
Tactical Folding Knife	sw-3 cut	C, 1	-1	\$30	0.5	5	0	
or	thr-1 imp	C	-1	–	–	5		
<b>SHORTSWORD (DX-5, Broadsword-2, Jitte/Sai-3, Knife-4, Saber-4, Smallsword-4, or Tonfa-3)</b>								
Expandable Baton	sw cr	1	0	\$60	2	6	-1	
or	thr cr	1	0	–	–	6		
Police Baton	sw cr	1	0	\$20	1	6	-2	
or	thr cr	1	0	–	–	6		
<b>TONFA (DX-5 or Shortsword-3)</b>								
Tonfa	sw cr	1	0	\$40	1.5	7	-3	[3]
or	thr cr	C, 1	0	–	–	7		

### Notes

[1] Receives Brawling or Karate damage bonuses.

[2] Victim must roll HT-3 or be stunned for as long as weapon is in contact plus (20 - HT) seconds longer. He can then roll vs. HT-3 to recover.

[3] Use Brawling or Karate parry if better than weapon parry.

*Concussion.* 4-second fuse. Inflicts 5d cr ex. \$30, 0.3 lb.  
*Fragmentation.* 4-second fuse. Inflicts 3d-1 [2d] cr ex. \$25, 0.4 lb.

*Smoke.* 2-second fuse. Fills 7-yard radius with smoke for 50 seconds. \$35, 1 lb.

*Stun.* 2-second fuse. Everyone in 10-yard radius must roll HT-5, at +5 for each of Protected Hearing and Protected

Vision, or be stunned. Roll HT-5 to recover each turn. \$30, 0.5 lb.

## MELEE WEAPONS

All TL8 *blades* are *fine*. To avoid confusion with other **GURPS** books, the resulting +1 damage isn't included on the *Melee Weapons Table* – be sure to add it!

# VEHICLES

Action heroes love to drive, and most TL6-8 vehicles from pp. B464-465 and **GURPS High-Tech** are appropriate. Below is a *short* selection, described according to pp. B462-463. Customization options are available, with “cost factors” (CF) that work exactly like those for tools and gadgets (p. 26):

*Attractive:* Custom paint job, velvet-glove interior, etc., gives a reaction or Influence roll bonus in scenes where the vehicle is the center of attention: +1 for +1 CF, +2 for +2 CF, and +3 for +3 CF.

*Rugged Design:* Gives a HT bonus: +1 for +1 CF, +2 for +4 CF.

*Superior Handling:* Gives a Handling bonus: +1 for +1 CF or +2 for +4 CF.

## USED VEHICLES

Second-hand vehicles are cheap but often defective. Buy a vehicle from the *Vehicle Table* and apply the desired options. Then for every 10% knocked off *final* price (max. 60% off), roll 2d on this table *in front of the GM*:

**2-3** – *Bad Engine:* Engine dies (effectively disabled) for 3d seconds on any failed control roll. Reroll for unpowered vehicles or repeated results.

**4** – *Unresponsive:* -1 to Handling.\*

**5-6** – *Mistreated:* -1 to HT.\*

**7** – No problem!

**8-9** – *Short “Legs”:* -10% Range.\*

**10** – *Wobbly:* -1 to SR.\*

**11** – *Slow:* -10% Top Speed.\*

**12** – *Unsafe:* No note or “c” (Combustible) on HT becomes “f” (Flammable), “f” becomes “x” (Explosive). Reroll after this reaches “x” (“f,” if unpowered).\*

\* Multiple occurrences are cumulative!

*Example:* Vince wants a flashy car! He goes for a sports car (base \$85,000) with +3 for looks (+3 CF) and +2 to Handling (+4 CF), for a net Handling of +3. Such a car is \$680,000 – the price of a high-end Ferrari. Vince lacks 68 points for Signature Gear, so he buys at 60% off, making the price \$272,000 and risking six table rolls. He gets two 7s (no problems) but also a 3, two 9s, and a 10, meaning a failure-prone engine, 20% less range (becomes 400 miles), and -1 to SR (for a net SR 3).

## Vehicle Table

Vehicle	ST/HP	Hnd/SR	HT	Move	LWt.	Load	SM	Occ.	DR	Range	Cost	Locations
<b>BOATING (MOTORBOAT)</b>												
Inflatable Boat	20	+2/2	11	2/12	0.6	0.5	+1	1+4	2	100	\$2K	O
Speedboat	50	+1/3	11f	3/20	2	1	+2	1+9	3	200	\$18K	O
<b>DRIVING (AUTOMOBILE)</b>												
HMMWV	72	0/5	11	3/33	4.1	1	+3	2+2	8	300	\$70K	G4WX
Luxury Car	57	0/4	11f	3/57*	2.1	0.6	+3	1+4	5	500	\$30K	G4W
Sports Car	57	+1/4	10f	5/75*	1.8	0.3	+3	1+3	4	500	\$85K	G4W
SUV	68	-1/4	11f	3/50	4	1.5	+3	1+4	5	400	\$45K	G4W
Van	68	-1/4	11f	2/45*	3.5	1	+4	1+7	4	650	\$25K	g4W
<b>DRIVING (MOTORCYCLE)</b>												
Heavy Bike	36	+1/2	10f	6/40*	0.6	0.22	0	1+1	4	210	\$15K	E2W
Sports Bike	30	+2/2	11f	8/64	0.5	0.23	0	1+1	4	250	\$18K	E2W
<b>PILOTING (GLIDER)</b>												
Hang-Glider	16†	+3/2	10c	0/25	0.13	0.1	+1	1	1	–	\$4K	EWi
<b>PILOTING (HELICOPTER)</b>												
Light Helicopter	53	+2/2	10f	2/65	2.4	0.7	+4	1+5	3	300	\$500K	GH3W
<b>SCUBA</b>												
Dive Torpedo	20	+2/2	10	1/2	0.19	0.13	0	1	4	4	\$5.5K	E

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